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43

THE LIFE

OF

EDWARD IRVING,

MINISTER OF
THE NATIONAL SCOTCH CHURCH, LONDON.

Illustrated by his Journals and Correspondence.

BY MRS OLIPHANT.

"Whether I live, I live unto the Lord; and whether I die, I die unto the Lord; living or dying, I am the Lord's." Amen.

Sixth Edition.

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TO ALL WHO LOVE THE MEMORY OF

EDWARD IRVING:

WHICH THE WRITER HAS FOUND BY MUCH EXPERIMENT

TO MEAN ALL WHO EVER KNEW HIM:

THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED.

12 MAY 1923

PREFACE.

It seems necessary to say something, by way of excusing myself for what I feel must appear to many the presumption of undertaking so serious a work as this biography. I need not relate the various unthought-of ways by which I have been led to undertake it, which are my apology to myself rather than to the public; but I may say that, in a matter so complicated and delicate, it appeared to me a kind of safeguard that the writer of Edward Irving's Life should be a person without authority to pronounce judgment on one side or the other, and interested chiefly with the man himself, and his noble courageous warfare through a career encompassed with all human agonies. I hoped to get personal consolation amid heavy troubles out of a life so full of great love, faith, and sorrow; and I have found this life so much more lofty, pure, and true than my imagination, that the picture, unfolding under my hands, has often made me pause to think how such a painter as the Blessed Angelico took the attitude of devotion at his labour, and painted such saints on his knees. The large extracts which, by the kindness of his surviving children, I have been permitted to make from Irving's letters, will show the readers of this book, better than any description, what manner of man he was; and I feel assured that to be able thus to illustrate the facts of his history by his own exposition of

its heart and purpose, is to do him greater justice than could be hoped for from any other means of interpretation.

My thanks are due, first and above all, to Professor Martin Irving, of Melbourne, and to his sister, Mrs S. R. Gardiner, London, who have kindly permitted me the use of their father's letters; to the Rev. James Brodie and Mrs Brodie, of Monimail, and Miss Martin, Edinburgh; to J. Fergusson, Esq., and W. Dickson, Esq., Glasgow, nephews of Irving; the Rev. Dr Grierson, of Errol; Patrick Sheriff, Esq., of Haddington; Mrs Carlyle, Chelsea; the Rev. Dr Hanna; M. N. Macdonald Hume, Esq.; James Bridges, Esq.; Rev. D. Ker, Edinburgh; Rev. J. M. Campbell, late of Row; J. Hatley Frere, Esq., London; Rev. A. J. Scott, of Manchester; Dr G. M. Scott, Hampstead; Rev. R. H. Story, of Rosneath; and other friends of Irving, some of them now beyond the reach of earthly thanks—among whom I may mention the late Henry Drummond, Esq., of Albury, and Mrs Wm. Hamilton—who have kindly placed letters and other memoranda at my disposal, or given me the benefit of their personal recollections.

The present Edition has been carefully revised, and an Index added with the view of giving further completeness to the work.

M. O. W. OLIPHANT.

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EDWARD IRVING.

CHAPTER I.

HIS PARENTAGE AND CHILDHOOD.

In the autumn of the eventful year 1792, at the most singular crisis of the world's history which has arisen in modern times,—when France was going mad in her revolution, and the other nations of Christendom were crowding in, curious and dismayed, to see that spectacle which was to result in so many other changes, but far away from all those outcries and struggles, in the peaceful little Scotch town of Annan, Edward Irving, the story of whose life is to be told in the following pages, was born. He was the son of Gavin Irving, of a long-established local kindred, well known, but undistinguished, who followed the humble occupation of a tanner in Annan, and of Mary Lowther, the handsome and high-spirited daughter of a small landed proprietor in the adjacent parish of Dornoch. Among the Irving forefathers were a family of Howys, Albigenses, or at least French Protestant refugees, one of whom had become parish minister in Annan, and has left behind him some recollections of lively wit worthy his race, and a tombstone, with a quaint inscription, which is one of the wonders of the melancholy and crowded churchyard, or rather burying-ground; for the present church of the town has left the graves behind. The same dismal enclosure, with its nameless mounds, rising mysterious through the rugged grass, proclaims the name of Irving on every side in many lines of kindred; but these tombstones seem almost the only record extant of the family. The Lowthers were more notable people. The eldest brother, Tristram, whom Edward characterizes as "Uncle Tristram of Dornoch, the wilful," seems to have been one of the acknowledged characters of that

characteristic country. He lived and died a bachelor, saving, litigious, and eccentric; and, determined to enjoy in his lifetime that fame which is posthumous to most men, he erected his own tombstone in Dornoch churchyard, recording on it the most memorable of his achievements. The greatest of these were, winning a lawsuit in which he had been engaged against his brothers, and building a bridge. It appears that he showed true wisdom in getting what satisfaction he could out of his autobiographical essay while he lived; for his respectable heirs have balked Tristram, and carried away the characteristic monument. Another brother lives in local tradition as the good-natured giant of the district. It is told of him that, having once accompanied his droves into England (they were all grazier farmers by profession), the Scottish Hercules, placid of temper, and perhaps a little slow of apprehension, according to the nature of giants, was refreshing himself in an old-fashioned tavern—locality uncertain—supposed to be either the dock precincts of Liverpool, or the eastern wastes of London. The other guests in the great sanded kitchen, where they were all assembled, amused themselves with an attempt to "chaff" and aggravate the stranger; and finding this tedious work, one rash joker went so far as to insult him, and invite a quarrel. George Lowther bore it long, probably slow to comprehend the idea of quarrelling with such antagonists; at last, when his patience was exhausted, the giant, grimly humorous, if not angry, seized, some say a great iron spit from the wall, some a poker from the hearth, and twisting it round the neck of his unfortunate assailant, quietly left him to the laughter and condolences of his comrades till a blacksmith could be brought to release him from that impromptu pillory. Gavin Irving's wife was of this stout and primitive race. Her activity and cheerful, high-spirited comeliness are still well remembered by the contemporaries of her children; and even the splendour of the scarlet riding-skirt and Leghorn hat, in which she came home as a bride, are still reflected in some old memories.

The families on both sides were of competent substance and reputation, and rich in individual character. No wealth, to speak of, existed among them: a little patriarchal foundation of land and cattle, from which the eldest son might perhaps claim a territorial designation if his droves found prosperous market across the border; the younger sons, trained to independent trades, one of them, perhaps, not disdaining to throw his plaid over his shoulder and call his dog to his heels behind one of these same droves, a sturdy noviciate to his grazier life; while the inclinations of another might quite as

naturally and suitably lead him to such study of law as may be necessary for a Scotch "writer," or to the favourite and most profoundly respected of all professions, "the ministry," as it is called in Scotland. The Irving and Lowther families embraced both classes, with all the intermediary steps between them; and Gavin Irving and his wife, in their little house at Annan, stood perhaps about midway between the homely refinement of the Dumfriesshire manses and the rude profusion of the Annandale farms.

Of this marriage eight children were born,—three sons, John, Edward, and George, all of whom were educated to learned professions; and five daughters, all respectably married. All the sisters seem to have left representatives behind them; but John and George both died unmarried before the death of their distinguished brother. The eldest, whom old friends speak of as "one of the handsomest young men of his day," and whom his father imagined the genius of the family, died obscurely in India on Edward's birthday, the 4th of August, in the prime of his manhood, a medical officer in the East India Company's service. He was struck down by a jungle fever, a sharp and sudden blow, and his friends had not even the satisfaction of knowing fully the circumstances of his death. But henceforward the day, made thus doubly memorable, was consecrated by Edward as a solemn fast-day, and spent in the deepest seclusion. Under the date of a letter, written on the 2nd of August some years after, he writes the following touching note:—"4 *August, Dies natalis atque fatalis incidit*," translated underneath by himself "The day of birth and of death draweth nigh." The highest art could not have reared such a monument to the early dead.

The stormy firmament under which these children were born, and all the commotions going on in the outside world, scarcely seem to have fluttered the still atmosphere of the little rural town in which they first saw the light. There the quiet years were revolving, untroubled by either change or tumult: quiet traffic, slow, safe, and unpretending, sailed its corn-laden sloops from the Waterfoot, the little port where Annan Water flows into the Solway; and sent its droves across the border, and grew soberly rich without alteration of either position or manners. The society of the place was composed of people much too well known in all the details and antecedents of their life to entertain for a moment the idea of forsaking their humble natural sphere. The Kirk lay dormant, by times respectable and decorous, by times, unfortunately, much the reverse, but very seldom reaching a higher point than that of

respectability. Politics did not exist as an object of popular interest. The "Magistrates" of Annan elected their sixth part of a member of Parliament dutifully as his Grace's agents suggested, and gleaned poor posts in the Customs and Excise for their dependent relations. The parish school, perhaps of a deeper efficiency than anything else in the place, trained boys and girls together into stout practical knowledge, and such rude classic learning as has established itself throughout Scotland. High Puritanism, such as is supposed to form the distinguishing feature of Scotch communities, was undreamed of in this little town. According to its fashion Annan was warmly hospitable and festive, living in a little round of social gaieties. These gaieties were for the most part tea parties, of a description not now known, unless, perhaps, they may still linger in Annan and its companion-towns,—parties in which tea was a meal of much serious importance, accompanied by refreshments of a more substantial kind, and followed by a sober degree of joviality. The families who thus amused themselves grew up in the closest relations of neighbourship; they sent off sons into the world to gain name and fame beyond the highest dreams of the countryside, yet to be fondly claimed on coming back with an old affection closer than fame, as still the well-known John or Edward of all their contemporaries in Annan. Nothing could contrast more strangely with the idea which, looking back, we instinctively form of the state of matters at that stirring epoch, than this little neutral-coloured community, dimly penetrated by its weekly newspaper, living a long way off from all startling events, and only waking into knowledge of the great commotions going on around, when other occurrences had obliterated them, and their interest was exhausted. Nor was there any intellectual or spiritual movement among themselves to make up. The Kirk, the great mainspring of Scottish local life, was dormant, as we have said, —as indeed the Church was at this era in most places throughout the world. The Annan clergyman was one whom old parishioners still can scarcely bear to blame, but who in his best days could only be spoken of with affectionate pity; a man whose habitual respect for his own position made him "always himself," in the pulpit—a quaint and melancholy distinction—and who never would tolerate the sound of an oath even when constantly frequenting places where oaths were very usual embellishments of conversation. Religion had little active existence in the place, as may be supposed; but the decorum which preserved the minister's Sundays in unimpeachable sobriety kept up throughout the community a certain religious

habit, the legacy of a purer generation. Household psalms still echoed of nights through the closed windows, and children, brought up among few other signs of piety, were yet trained in the habit of family prayers. This was almost all the religion which existed in Puritan Scotland in these eventful French Revolution days; and even this was owing more to the special traditions of the soil in such a region as Annandale, than to any deeper impulse of faith.

For outside this comfortable prosaic world was a world of imagination and poetry, never to be dissevered from that border country. Strange difference of a few centuries! The Annandale droves went peaceably to the Southern market, past many a naked peelhouse and austere tower of defence on both sides of the border; but the country, watched and guarded by these old apparitions, had not forgotten the moss-troopers: and far more clearly and strongly, with vision scarcely sufficiently removed from the period even to be impartial, the district which held the Stones of Irongray, and enclosed many a Covenanter's grave, remembered that desperate fever and frenzy of persecution through which the Kirk had once fought her way. I recollect, at a distance of a great many years, the energy with which a woman-servant from that countryside told tales of the "Lag," who is the Claverhouse of the border, till the imagination of a nursery, far removed from the spot, fixed upon him, in defiance of all nearer claims, as the favourite horror,—the weird, accursed spirit whom young imaginations, primitive and unsentimental, have no compunctions about delivering over to Satan. This old world of adventurous romance and martyr legend thrilled and palpitated around the villages of Annandale. The educated people in the town, the writer or the doctor, or possibly the minister, all the men who were wiser than their neighbours, might perhaps entertain enlightened views touching those Covenanter fanatics whom enlightened persons are not supposed to entertain much sympathy with; but in the tales of the ingleside—in the narratives heard by the red glow of the great kitchen fire, or in the farm-house chimney corner—enlightened views were out of court, and the home-spun martyrs of the soil were absolute masters of all hearts and suffrages. And perhaps few people out of the reach of such an influence, can comprehend the effect which is produced upon the ardent, young, inexperienced imagination by those familiar tales of torture endured, and death accomplished, by men bearing the very names of the listeners, and whose agony and triumph have occurred in places of which every nook and corner is familiar to their eyes. The impression made is such

as nothing after can ever efface or obliterate; and it has the effect—an effect I confess not very easily explainable to those who have not experienced it—of weaving round the bald services of the Scotch Church a charm of imagination more entrancing and visionary than the highest poetic ritual could command, and of connecting her absolute canons and unpicturesque economy with the highest epic and romance of national faith. Perhaps this warm recollection of her martyrs, and of that fervent devotion which alone can make martyrs possible, has done more to neutralise the hard common sense of the country, and to preserve the Scotch Church from over-legislating herself into decrepitude, than any other influence. We too, like every other Church and race, have our legends of the Saints, and make such use of them in the depths of our reserve and national reticence as few strangers guess or could conceive.

It was in this community that Edward Irving received his first impressions. He was born on the 4th of August, 1792, in a little house near the old town-cross of Annan. There he was laid in his wooden cradle, to watch with unconscious eyes the light coming in at the low, long window of his mother's narrow bedchamber; or rather, according to the ingenious hypothesis of a medical friend of his own, to lie exercising one eye upon that light, and intensifying into that one eye, by way of emphatic unconscious prophecy of the future habit of his soul, all his baby power of vision—a power which the other eye, hopelessly obscured by the wooden side of the cradle, was then unable to use, and never after regained; an explanation of the vulgar obliquity called a squint, which I venture to recommend to all unprejudiced readers. The stairs which led to Mrs Irving's bedchamber ascended through the kitchen, a cheerful, well-sized apartment as such houses go; and in the other end of the house, next to the kitchen, was the parlour, a small, inconceivably small room, in which to rear a family of eight stalwart sons and daughters, and to exercise all the hospitalities required by that sociable little community. But society in Annan was evidently as indifferent to a mere matter of space as society in a more advanced development. The tanner's yard was opposite the house, across the little street. There he lived in the full exercise of his unsavoury occupation, with his children growing up around him; a quiet man, chiefly visible as upholding the somewhat severe discipline of the schoolmaster against the less austere virtue of the mother, who, handsome and energetic, was the ruling spirit of the house. It is from Mrs Irving that her family seem to have taken that somewhat solemn and dark type of beauty which,

marred only by the intervention of the wooden cradle, became famous in the person of her illustrious son. I do not say that she realized the ordinary popular notion about the mothers of great men; but it is apparent that she was great in all that sweet personal health, force, and energy which distinguished her generation of Scottish women; and which, perhaps, with the shrewdness and characteristic individuality which accompany it, is of more importance to the race and nation than any degree of mere intellect. "Evangelicalism," said Edward Irving, long after, "has spoiled both the minds and bodies of the women of Scotland—there are no women now like my mother." The devotedest evangelical believer might forgive the son for that fond and filial saying. It is clear that no conventional manner of speech, thought, or barrier of ecclesiastical proprieties unknown to nature, had limited the mother of those eight Irvings, whom she brought up accordingly in all the freedom of a life almost rural, yet amid all the warm and kindly influences of a community of friends. To be born in such a place and such a house, was to come into the world entitled to the familiar knowledge and affection of "all the town"—a fact which may be quaintly apprehended in the present Annan, by the number of nameless quiet old people, who, half admiring and half incredulous of the fame of their old school-fellow, brighten up into vague talk of "Edward" when a stranger names his name.

The first appearance which Edward Irving made out of this house with its wooden cradle, was at a little school, preparatory to more serious education, kept by "Peggy Paine," a relation of the unfortunate tailor-sceptic who in those days was in uneasy quarters in Paris, in the midst of the revolution. An old woman, now settled for her old age in her native town, who had in after years encountered her great townsman in London, and remaining loyally faithful to his teaching all her life, is now, I suppose, the sole representative in Annan of the religious body commonly called by his name, remembers in those old vernal days how Edward helped her to learn her letters, and how they two stammered into their first syllables over the same book in Peggy Paine's little school. This was the beginning of a long friendship, as singular as it is touching, and which may here be followed through its simple course. When Edward, long after, was the most celebrated preacher of his day, and Hannah, the Annan girl whom he had helped to learn her letters, was also in London, a servant struggling in her own sphere through the troubles of that stormier world, her old school-fellow stretched out his cordial hand to her, without

a moment's shrinking from the work in which her hand was engaged. It was natural that all the world about her should soon know of that friendship. And Hannah's "family" were ambitious, like everybody else, of the acquaintance of the hero of the day. He was too much sought to be easily accessible, till the master and mistress bethought themselves of the intercession of their maid, and sent her with their invitation to back it by her prayers. The result was a triumph for Hannah. Irving gratified the good people by going to dine with them for his school-fellow's sake. I am not aware that anything romantic or remarkable came of the introduction so accomplished, as perhaps ought to have happened to make the incident poetically complete; but I cannot help regarding it as one of the pleasantest of anecdotes. Hannah lives at Annan, an old woman, pensioned by the grateful representative of the family whom she had faithfully served, and tells with tears this story of her friend; and stands a homely, solitary pillar, the representative of the "Catholic Apostolic Church" in the place which gave its most distinguished member birth.

The next stage of Edward's education was greatly in advance of Peggy Paine. Schoolmasters must have been either a more remarkable race of men in those days, or the smaller number of them must have enhanced their claim upon popular appreciation. At least it was no uncommon matter for the parishes and little towns of Scotland to fix with pride upon their schoolmaster as the greatest boast of their district. Such was the case with Mr Adam Hope, who taught the young Irvings, and after them a certain Thomas Carlyle from Ecclefechan, with other not undistinguished men. There were peculiarities in that system of education. People below the rank of gentry did not think of sending their daughters to what were called boarding-schools; or at least were subject to much derisive remark if they ventured on such an open evidence of ambition. The female schools in existence were distinctively *sewing* schools, and did not pretend to do much for the intellect; so that boys and girls trooped in together, alike to the parish-school and the superior academy, sat together on the same forms, stood together in the same classes, and not unfrequently entered into tough combats for prizes and distinctions, whimsical enough to hear of now-a-days. Of this description was the Annan Academy, at which Edward does not appear to have taken any remarkable position. He does not seem even to have attained the distinction of one of those dunces of genius who are not unknown to literature. Under the severe discipline of those days he sometimes came home

from school with his ears "pinched until they bled," to his mother's natural resentment; but found no solace to his wounded feelings and members from his father, who sided with the master, and does not seem to have feared the effect of such trifles upon the sturdy boys, who were all destined to fight their way upward by the brain rather than the hands. The only real glimpse which is to be obtained of Edward in his school days discloses the mournful picture of a boy "kept in," and comforted in the ignominious solitude of the school-room by having his "piece" hoisted up to him by a cord through a broken window. However, he showed some liking for one branch of education, that of mathematics, in which he afterwards distinguished himself. It was the practice in Annan to devote one day of the week specially to mathematical lessons, an exceptional day, which the boys hailed as a kind of holiday.

The little town, however, was not destitute of classical ambition. Tradition tells of a certain Blind John who had picked up a knowledge of Latin in the parish school, chiefly from hearing the lessons of other boys there; and had struggled somehow to such a height of latinity that his teaching and his pupils were renowned as far as Edinburgh, where awful professors did not scorn to acknowledge his attainments. It is probable that Edward did not study under this unauthorized instructor; and the orthodox prelections of the Academy did not develope the literary inclinations of the athletic boy, who found more engrossing interests in every glen and hillside. For nothing was wanting to the perfection of his education out of doors. There were hills to climb, a river close at hand, a hospitable and friendly country to be explored; and the miniature port at the Waterfoot, where impetuous Solway bathed with tawny salt waves the little pier, and boats that tempted forth the adventurous boyhood of Annan. Early in Edward's life he became distinguished for feats of swimming, walking, rowing, climbing, all sorts of open-air exercises. The main current of his energy flowed out in this direction, and not in that of books. His scattered kindred gave full occasion for long walks and such local knowledge as adventurous school-boys delight in; and when he and his companions went to Dornoch, to his mother's early home, where his uncles still lived, it was Edward's amusement, says a surviving relative, to leap all the gates in the way. This fact survives all the speculations that may have been in the boy's brain on that rural, thoughtful road. His thoughts, if he had any, dispersed into the listening air and left no sign; but there can be no mistake about the leaping of the gates.

In this early period of his life he is said to have met with an adventure, sufficiently picturesque and important to be recorded. Every one who knows the Solway is aware of the peculiarities of that singular estuary. When the tide is full, a nobler firth is not to be seen than this brimming flood of green sea-water, with Skiddaw glooming on the other side over the softer slopes of Cumberland, and Criffel standing sentinel on this, upon the Scotch sea-border; but when the tide is out, woeful and lamentable is the change. Solway, shrunk to a tithe of its size, meanders, gleaming through vast banks of sand, leaving here and there a little desert standing bare in the very midst of its channel, covered with stake-nets which raise their heads in the strangest, unexpected way, upon a spot where vessels of considerable burden might have passed not many hours before. The firth, indeed, is so reduced in size by the ebbing of the tide, that it is possible to ride, or even to drive a cart across from one side to the other; a feat, indeed, which is daily accomplished, and which might furnish a little variation upon the ancient romantic routine of Gretna Green, as the ferryman at the Brough was in former times equally qualified with the blacksmith at the border toll, and not without much patronage, though his clients were humbler fugitives. When, however, Solway sets about his daily and nightly reflow, he does it with a rush and impetuosity worthy of the space he has to fill, and is a dangerous playfellow when "at the turn." One day while they were still children, John and Edward Irving are said to have strayed down upon these great sands, with the original intention of meeting their uncle, George Lowther, who was expected to cross Solway at the ebb, on his way to Annan. The scene was specially charming in its wild solitude and freedom. In that wilderness of sand and shingle, with its gleaming salt-water pools clear as so many mirrors, full of curious creatures still unknown to drawing-room science, but not to school-boy observation, the boys presently forgot all about their immediate errand, and, absorbed in their own amusement, thought neither of their uncle nor of the rising tide. While thus occupied, a horseman suddenly came up to them at full gallop, seized first one and then the other of the astonished boys, and throwing them across the neck of his horse, galloped on without pausing to address a word to them, or even perceiving who they were. When they had safely reached the higher shingly bank, out of reach of the pursuing tide, he drew bridle at last, and pointed back breathless to where he had found them. The startled children, perceiving the danger they had escaped, saw the tawny waves pursuing almost to where

they stood, and the sands on which they had been playing buried far under that impetuous sea; and it was only then that the happy Hercules-uncle discovered that it was his sister's sons whom he had saved. Had George Lowther been ten minutes later, one of the noblest tragic chapters of individual life in the nineteenth century need never have been written; and his native seas, less bitter than the sea of life that swallowed him up at last, would have received the undeveloped fortunes of the blameless Annan boy.

Another momentary incident, much less picturesque and momentous, yet characteristic enough, disperses for the minutest point of time the mists of sixty years, and shows us two urgent childish petitioners, Edward with his little brother George, at the door of a neighbour's house in Annan, where there was a party, at which Mrs Irving was one of the guests. Edward was so pertinacious in his determination to see his mother, that the circumstance impressed itself upon the memory of one of the children of the house. Mrs Irving at last went to the door to speak to her children, probably apprehensive of some domestic accident; but found that the occasion of all this urgency was Edward's anxiety to be permitted to give some of his own linen to a sick lad who was in special want of it. The permission was given, the boys plunged joyful back into the darkness, and the mother returned to her party, where, doubtless, she told the tale with such pretended censure as mothers use. Momentary and slight as the incident is, it is still appropriate to the early history of one who in his after days could never *give* enough to whosoever lacked.

Even at this early period of his existence, it has been said that Irving was prematurely solemn and remarkable in his manners, "making it apparent that he was not a child as others," and having "a significant elevation of manners and choice of pleasures." I can find no traces of any such precocity; nor is it easy to fancy how a natural boy, in such a shrewd and humorous community, where pomp of any kind would have been speedily laughed out of him, could have shown any such singularity. Nor was he ever in the slightest degree of that abstract and self-absorbed fashion of mind which makes a child remarkable. He seems, however, to have sought, and got access to, a certain kind of society which, though perhaps odd enough for a school-boy, was such as all children of lively mind and generous sympathies love. At this early period of his life it was his occasional habit to walk five or six miles to the little village of Ecclefechan, in company with a pilgrim band of the religious patriarchs of Annan, to attend a little church established there by one of the earlier bodies of seceders from the

Church of Scotland; an act which has been attributed to his dissatisfaction with the preaching and character of the Annan minister, already referred to, and his precocious appreciation of sound doctrine and fervent piety. The fact is doubtless true enough; but I think it very unlikely that any premature love for sermons or discrimination of their quality was the cause. Scotch dissenters, in their earlier development at least, were all doubly Presbyterian. The very ground of their dissent was not any widening out of doctrine or alteration of Church government, but only a re-assertion and closer return to the primitive principles of the Kirk itself—a fact which popular discrimination in the south of Scotland acknowledged by referring back to the unforgotten "persecuting times" for a name, and entitling the seceders "Whigs"—a name which they retained until very recent days in those simple-minded districts. The pious people who either originated or gladly took advantage of such humble attempts to recall the Church to herself, and bring back religion to a covenanted but unfaithful country, were thus identified with the saints and martyrs of whom the whole countryside was eloquent. They were, as was natural, the gravest class of the community; men who vexed their righteous souls day by day over the shortcomings of the minister and the worldly-mindedness of the people; and proved their covenanting lineage by piety of an heroic, austere pitch beyond the level of their neighbours.

Young Edward Irving had already made his way, as most imaginative children manage to do, into the confidence of the old people who knew and were not reluctant to tell the epics of their native districts; and those epics were all covenanting tales—tragedies abrupt and forcible, or lingering, long-drawn narratives, more fascinating still, in which all human motives, hopes, and ambitions were lost in the one all-engrossing object of existence, the preservation and confession of the truth. With glowing, youthful cheeks, fresh from the moor or the frith, the boy penetrated into the cottage fireside, where the fragrant peat threw its crimson glow through the apartment, and the old man or the old woman, in the leisure of their age, sat in the great high-backed chair with its checked linen cover; and with a curiosity still more wistful and eager, as though about to see those triumphs of faith repeated, trudged forth in the summer Sunday afternoons, unbonneted, with his black locks ruffling in the wind and his cap in his hand, amid the little band of patriarchs, through hedgerows fragrant with every succession of blossom, to where the low grey hills closed in around that little hamlet of Ecclefechan, *Ecclesia Fechani*, for-

gotten shrine of some immemorial Celtic saint; a scene not grandly picturesque, but full of a sweet pastoral freedom and solitude; the hills rising grey against the sky, with slopes of springy turf where the sheep pastured, and shepherds of an antique type pondered the ways of God with men: the road crossed at many a point, and sometimes accompanied, by tiny brooklets, too small to claim a separate name, tinkling unseen among the grass and underwood, to join some bigger but still tiny tributary of the Annan, streams which had no pretensions to be rivers, but were only "waters" like Annan Water itself. To me this country gleams with a perpetual youth; the hills rise clear and wistful through the sharp air, this with its Roman camp indented on its side, that with its melancholy Repentance Tower standing out upon the height; the moor brightens forth as one approaches into sweet brakes of heather and golden clumps of gorse; the burns sing in a never-failing liquid cheerfulness through all their invisible courses; freedom, breadth, silence, touched with all those delicious noises: the quiet hamlets and cottages breathing forth that aromatic betrayal of all their warm turf fires. Place in this landscape that grave group upon the way, bending their steps to the rude meeting-house in which their austere worship was to be celebrated, holding discourse as they approached upon subjects not so much of religious feeling as of high metaphysical theology; with the boy among them, curiously attracted by their talk, timing his elastic footsteps to their heavy tread, making his unconscious comments, a wonderful impersonation of perennial youth and genius, half leading, half following, always specially impressed by the grey fathers of that world which dawns all fresh and dewy upon his own vision; and I cannot fancy a better picture of old Scotland as it was in its most characteristic districts and individual phase.

This seems the only foundation from which precocious seriousness can be inferred, and it is an important and interesting feature of his boyhood. The Whig elders no doubt unconsciously prepared the germs of that old-world stateliness of speech and dignity of manner which afterwards distinguished their pupil; and they, and the traditions to which they had served themselves heirs, made all the higher element and poetry of life which was to be found in Annan. Their influence, however, did not withdraw him from the society of his fellows. The social instinct was at all times too strong in him to be prevented from making friends wherever he found companions. His attachment to his natural comrade, his brother John, is touchingly proved by the fact we have already noted;

and another boyish friendship, formed with Hugh Clapperton, the African traveller, who was, like himself, a native of Annan, concluded only with the death of that intrepid explorer. Young Clapperton lived in an adjoining house which was the property of Gavin Irving, and the same "yard" with its elm trees was common to both the families. The boys sometimes shared their meals, and often the fireside corner, where they learned their lessons; and the adventurous instinct of young Clapperton evidently had no small influence upon the dreams, at least, of his younger companion. Of these three boys, so vigorous, bold, and daring, not one lived to be old; and their destinies are a singular proof of the wide diffusion of life and energy circling out from one of the most obscure spots in the country. One was to die in India, uncommemorated except by love; one in Africa, a hero (or victim) of that dread science which makes stepping-stones of men's lives; the third, at a greater distance still from that boyish chimney-corner, at the height of fame, genius, and sorrow, was to die, a sign and wonder, like other prophets before him. It is sad to connect the conclusion with a beginning which bore little foreboding of such tragic elements. But it is scarcely possible to note the boyish conclave without thinking of the singular fortunes and far separation to which they were destined. The friendship that commenced thus was renewed when Clapperton and Irving met in London, both famous men; and the last communication sent to England by the dying traveller was addressed to his early friend.

The little town was at this period in a prosperous condition, and thriving well. When war quickened the traffic in provisions, and increased their value, Annan exported corn as well as droves. But the industry of the population was leisurely and old-fashioned, much unlike the modern type. Many of the poorer folk about were salmon-fishers, but had no such market for their wares as now-a-days, when salmon in Annan is about as dear, and rather more difficult to be had, than salmon in London. When there had been a good "take," the fishermen lounged about the Cross, or amused themselves in their gardens, till that windfall was spent and exhausted, very much as if they had been mere Celtic fishermen instead of cautious Scots; and the slow gains of the careful burgesses came more from economy than enterprise. Gavin Irving, however, made progress in his tanner's yard; he became one of the magistrates of Annan, whose principal duty it was to go to church in state, and set an official example of well-doing. Tradition does not say whether his son's passion for the Whigs,

and expeditions to the Seceders' meeting-house at Ecclefechan, brought any "persecution" upon the boy; so it is probable those heterodox preachings were attended only in summer evenings, and on special occasions, when Annan kirk was closed. There were clerical relations on both sides of the house scattered through Dumfriesshire, to whom the boys seem to have paid occasional visits; one of them, Dr Bryce Johnstone, of Holywood, an uncle of Mrs Irving's, being a notable person among his brethren; but, further than the familiarity which this gave with the surrounding country, no special traces of the advantages of such intercourse exist. The loftier aspect of religion was in the Whig cottages, and not in those cosy manses to which Dr Carlyle, of Inveresk, has lately introduced all readers.

CHAPTER II.

HIS COLLEGE LIFE.

At thirteen Irving began his studies at the Edinburgh University: such was, and is still, to a great extent, the custom of Scotch universities,—a habit which, like every other educational habit in Scotland, promotes the diffusion of a little learning, and all the practical uses of knowledge, but makes the profounder depths of scholarship almost impossible. It was nearly universal in those days, and no doubt partly originated in the very long course of study demanded by the Church (always so influential in Scotland, and acting upon the habits even of those who are not devoted to her service), from applicants for the ministry. This lengthened process of education cannot be better described than in the words used by Irving himself, at a much later period of his life, and used with natural pride, as setting forth what his beloved Church required of her neophytes. "In respect to the ministers," he says, "this is required of them,—that they should have studied for four years in a university all the branches of a classical and philosophical education; and either taken the rank in literature of a Master of Arts, or come out from the university with certificates of their proficiency in the classics, in mathematics, in logic, and in natural and moral philosophy. They are then, and not till then, permitted to enter upon the study of

theology, of which the professors are ordained ministers of the Church, chosen to their office. Under separate professors they study theology, Hebrew, and ecclesiastical history, for four years, attending from four to six months in each year. Thus eight years are consumed in study." This is, perhaps, the only excuse which can be made for sending boys, still little more than children, into what ought to be the higher labours of a university. Even beginning at such an age, the full course of study exacted from a youth in training for the Church could not be completed till he had reached his twenty-first year, when all the repeated "trials" of the Presbytery had still to follow before he could enter upon his vocation; an apparent and comprehensible reason, if not excuse, for a custom which, according to the bitter complaints of its victims, turns the university into a kind of superior grammar school.

At thirteen, accordingly, Edward, accompanied by his elder brother John, who was destined for the medical profession, came to Edinburgh under the charge of some relatives of their Annan school-fellow, Hugh Clapperton; and the two lads were deposited in a lofty chamber in the old town, near the college, to pursue their studies with such diligence as was in them. Even to such youthful sons the Edinburgh University has no personal shelter to offer: then, as now, the Alma Mater was a mere abstract mass of class-rooms, museums, and libraries, and the youths or boys who sought instruction there were left in absolute freedom to their own devices. Perhaps the youths thus launched upon the world were too young to take much harm; or perhaps that early necessity of self-regulation, imposed under different and harder circumstances than those which have brought the English public schools into such fresh repute and popularity, bore all the fruit which it is now hoped and believed to produce. But whatever may be the virtues of self-government, it is impossible to contemplate without a singular interest and amaze, the spectacle of these two boys, one thirteen, the other, probably, about fifteen, placed alone in their little lodging in the picturesque but noisy old town of Edinburgh, for six long months at a stretch, to manage themselves and their education, without tutors, without home care, without any stimulus but that to be received in the emulation of the class-room, or from their books and their own ambition. These circumstances, however, were by no means remarkable or out of the common course of things; and the surprise with which we look back to so strange a picture of boyish life would not have been shared by the contemporary spectators who saw the south-country boys coming and going

to college without perceiving anything out of the way in it. The manner in which the little establishment was kept up is wonderfully primitive to hear of at so short a distance from our sophisticated times. Now and then the lads received a box from home, sent by the carrier, or by some "private opportunity," full of oatmeal, cheese, and other homely necessities, and doubtless not without lighter embellishments to prove the mother's care for her boys. Probably their linen was conveyed back and forward to the home-laundry by the same means; so that the *money* expense of the tiny establishment, with its porridge thus provided, and its home relishes of ham and cheese, making the school-boy board festive, must have been of the most limited amount. Altogether it is a quaint little picture of the patriarchal life, now departed for ever. No private opportunities now-a-days carry such boxes; and those very railways, which make the merest village next neighbour to all the world, have made an end of those direct primitive communications from the family table to its absent members. Nor is it easy to believe that boys of thirteen, living in lonely independence in Edinburgh, where the very streets are seducing and full of fascinations, and where every gleam of sunshine on the hills, and flash of reflection from the visible Firth, must draw youthful thoughts away from the steep *gradus* of a learning not hitherto found particularly attractive, could live within those strait and narrow limits and bear such a probation. But times were harder and simpler in the first twenty years of the century. Scotland was a hundred times more Scotch, more individual, more separate from its wealthier yoke-fellow than now. No greater contrast to the life of undergraduates in an ancient English university, could be imagined, than that presented by those boy-students in their lofty chamber, detached from all collegiate associations, living in the midst of a working-day population, utterly unimpressed by the neighbourhood of a university, and interpolating the homely youthful idyll of their existence into the noisy, bustling, scolding, not over-savoury life of that old town of Edinburgh. Even such a vestige of academical dress as is to be found in the quaint red gown of Glasgow is unknown to the rigid Protestantism of the Scotch metropolis. The boys came and went, undistinguished, in their country caps and jackets, through streets, which, full of character as they are, suggest nothing so little as the presence of a college, and returned to their studies in their little room, with neither tutor nor assistant to help them through their difficulties, and lived a life of unconscious austerity, in which they themselves did not per-

ceive either the poverty or the hardship; which, indeed, it is probable they themselves, and all belonging to them, would have been equally amazed and indignant to have heard either hardship or poverty attributed to. Crowds of other lads, from all parts of Scotland, lived a similar life; the homely fare and spare accommodation, the unassisted studies; and in most cases, as soon as that was practicable, personal exertions as teachers or otherwise, to help in the expense of their own education, looked almost a natural and inevitable beginning to the life they were to lead.

By such methods of instruction few men are trained to pursue and love learning for learning's sake; but only by such a Spartan method of training the young soldiers of the future, could the Annan tanner, with eight children to provide for, have given all his sons an education qualifying them for professional life and future advancement.

The Edinburgh "Session" lasts only from November till May; leaving the whole summer free for the recreation, or, more probably, the labours of the self-supporting students. Indeed, the whole system seems based upon the necessity of allowing time for the intervening work which is to provide means for the studies that follow. When the happy time of release arrived, our Annan boys sent off their boxes with the carrier, and, all joyful and vigorous, set out walking upon the homeward road. In after years Irving delighted in pedestrian journeys; and it was most probably in those early walks that he learned, what was his habitual practice afterwards, to rest in the wayside cottages, and share the potato or the porridge to be found there. The habit of universal friendliness thus engendered did him good service afterwards—for a man accustomed to such kindly relations with the poorest of his neighbours, does not need any other training to that frank uncondescending courtesy which is so dear to the poor. "Edward walked as the crow flies," says one of his surviving relatives who has accompanied those walks when time was. Such an eccentric, joyful, straightforward progress must have been specially refreshing to the school-boy students, hastening to all the delights of home and country freedom.

Whether Irving's progress during this period was beyond that of his contemporaries there is no evidence; but he succeeded sufficiently well to take his degree in April, 1809, when he was just seventeen, and to attract the friendly regard of Professor Christison, and of the distinguished and eccentric Sir John Leslie, then Mathematical Professor in the Edinburgh University; both of whom interested themselves in his behalf

as soon as he began his own independent career. So far as the library records go, he does not seem to have been an extraordinarily diligent student. There is a story told, which I have not been able to trace to any authentic source, of his having found in a farm-house, in the neighbourhood of Annan, a copy of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, which is said to have powerfully attracted him, and given an impulse to his thoughts. He is also said to have expended almost the whole sum which he had received for the expenses of a journey in the purchase of Hooker's works, "together with some odd folios of the Fathers, Homer, and Newton," and to have trudged forward afoot with the additional load upon his stalwart shoulders, in great delight with his acquisition. There can be no doubt, at least, of his own reference to "the venerable companion of my early days—Richard Hooker." In opposition to this serious reading stand the *Arabian Nights*, and sundry books with forgotten but suspicious titles, which appear against his name in those early times in the college library books—most natural and laudable reading for a boy, but curiously inappropriate as drawn from the library of his college. "He used to carry continually in his waistcoat pocket," says one of his few surviving college companions, the Rev. Dr Grierson, of Errol, "a miniature copy of Ossian; passages from which he read or recited in his walks in the country, or delivered with sonorous elocution and vehement gesticulation" for the benefit of his companions. This is the first indication I can find of his oratorical gifts, and that natural magniloquence of style which belonged equally to his mind and person.

Among all Irving's fellow-students, there are no names which have attained more than local celebrity, except that of Thomas Carlyle, whose fame has overtopped and outlasted that of his early friend; and Carlyle did not share the studies of the four first years of his college life. He stands alone among men who subsided into parishes, and chaplaincies, and educational chairs; but who were his equals, or more than his equals, in those days—without any connection with, or means of approach to, that splendid circle which, one would imagine, concentrated within so limited a sphere as that of Edinburgh, must have found out by magnetic attraction every light of genius within its bounds. But the ecclesiastical flats in which the youth stood, together with his humble origin, more than counteracted that magnetism. If the Church everywhere never fails to be reminded that her kingdom is not of this world, that reminder is specially thrust upon her in Scotland, where it is a principle of the creed of both ministers and people to believe

that even the payment in kind of applause and honour, which is gained in every other profession, is a sinful indulgence to a preacher; and where demands are made upon his time and patience far too engrossing to admit the claims of society. Irving went on in his early career far down in the shade of common life, out of reach of those lights which, to the next generation, illuminate the entire sphere—and grew from a boy to a young man, and took his boyish share in the college debating societies, and made his way among other nameless youths with no great mark of difference, so far as it appears. Dr Christison, the Humanity professor, noted him with a friendly eye; and odd, clumsy, kindly Leslie observed the fervour of the tall lad, and took him for a future prop of science. A younger fellow-student records simply how Irving, being more advanced than he, helped him on with his studies, according to that instinct of his nature which never forsook him. And he read Ossian, and argued, in defunct Philomathic societies, where he and other people fancied he met equal opponents; till it became necessary for him, seventeen years old, and a graduate of Edinburgh University, to begin to help himself onwards, during the tedious intervals of his professional training.

He did this, as all Scotch clerical students do, by teaching. A new school, called the Mathematical School, by some strange caprice,—since it seems to have been exactly like other schools,—had just been established in Haddington; and by the recommendation of Sir John Leslie and of Professor Christison, Irving got the appointment. It was in the spring of 1810, after one session, as it is called, in the "Divinity Hall," and at the age of eighteen, that he entered upon this situation. To somewhere about the same period must belong the description given of him in Carlyle's wonderful "*Eloge*." "The first time I saw Irving was in his native town of Annan. He was fresh from Edinburgh, with college prizes, high character and promise: he had come to see our schoolmaster, who had also been his. We heard of famed professors, of high matters classical, mathematical, a whole wonderland of knowledge; nothing but joy, health, hopefulness without end looked out from the blooming young man."

Another spectator of more prosaic vision declares him to have been "rather a showy young man"—a tendency always held in abhorrence by the sober Scotch imagination, which above all things admires the gift of reticence; or even, in default of better, that pride which takes the place of modesty. Irving, utterly ingenuous and open, always seeking love, and the approbation of love, and doubting no man, did not possess

this quality. "The blooming young man" went back to the school in which he was once kept in and punished, with candid, joyful self-demonstration, captivating the eyes which could see, and amusing those which had not that faculty. It was his farewell to his boyish, happy, dependent life.

And it was also the conclusion of his University education so far as reality went. For four or five years thereafter he was what is called a *partial* student of Divinity, matriculating regularly, and making his appearance in college to go through the necessary examinations, and deliver the prescribed discourses; but carrying on his intermediate studies by himself, according to a license permitted by the Church. His Haddington appointment removed him definitely from home and its homely provisions, and gave him an early outset for himself into the business and labours of independent life. So far from being a hardship, or matter to be lamented, it was the best thing his friends could have wished for him. Such interruptions in the course of professional education were all but universal in Scotland; and he went under the best auspices and with the highest hopes.

CHAPTER III.

HADDINGTON.

Irving entered upon this second chapter of his youthful life in the summer of 1810. He was then in his eighteenth year—still young enough, certainly, for the charge committed to him. Education was at a very low ebb in Haddington, which had not even a parish school to boast of, but was lost among "borough" regulations, and in the pottering hands of a little corporation. The rising tide, however, stirred a faint ripple in this quiet place; and the consequence was, the establishment of that school called the mathematical, to which came groups of lads not very much younger than the young teacher, who had been stupefied for years in such schools as did exist; and some of whom woke up like magic under the touch of the boy student, so little older than themselves. Coming to the little town under these circumstances, recommended as a distinguished student by a man of such eminence as Sir John Leslie, the young man had a favourable reception in his new

sphere. "When Irving first came to Haddington," writes one of his pupils, "he was a tall, ruddy, robust, handsome youth, cheerful and kindly disposed; he soon won the confidence of his advanced pupils, and was admitted into the best society in the town and neighbourhood." Into one house, at least, he went with a more genial introduction, and under circumstances equally interesting and amusing. This was the house of Dr Welsh, the principal medical man of the district, whose family consisted of one little daughter, for whose training he entertained more ambitious views than little girls are generally the subjects of. This little girl, however, was as unique in mind as in circumstances. She heard, with eager childish wonder, a perennial discussion carried on between her father and mother about her education; both were naturally anxious to secure the special sympathy and companionship of their only child. The doctor, recovering from his disappointment that she *was* a girl, was bent upon educating her like a boy, to make up as far as possible for the unfortunate drawback of sex; while her mother, on the contrary, hoped for nothing higher in her daughter than the sweet domestic companion most congenial to herself. The child, who was not supposed to understand, listened eagerly, as children invariably do listen to all that is intended to be spoken over their heads. Her ambition was roused; to be educated like a boy became the object of her entire thoughts, and set her little mind working with independent projects of its own. She resolved to take the first step in this awful but fascinating course, on her own responsibility. Having already divined that Latin was the first grand point of distinction, she made up her mind to settle the matter by learning Latin. A copy of the *Rudiments* was quickly found in the lumber-room of the house, and a tutor not much farther off in a humble student of the neighbourhood. The little scholar had a dramatic instinct; she did not pour forth her first lesson as soon as it was acquired, or rashly betray her secret. She waited the fitting place and moment. It was evening, when dinner had softened out the asperities of the day: the doctor sat in luxurious leisure in his dressing-gown and slippers, sipping his coffee; and all the cheerful accessories of the fireside picture were complete. The little heroine had arranged herself under the table, under the crimson folds of the cover, which concealed her small person. All was still: the moment was arrived. "*Penna, pennæ, pennam!*" burst forth the little voice in breathless steadiness. The result may be imagined: the doctor smothered his child with kisses, and even the mother herself had not a word to say: the victory was complete.

After this pretty scene, the proud doctor asked Sir John Leslie to send him a tutor for the little pupil who had made so promising a beginning. Sir John recommended the youthful teacher who was already in Haddington, and Edward Irving became the teacher of the little girl. Their hours of study were from six to eight in the morning—which inclines one to imagine that, in spite of his fondness, the excellent doctor must have held his household under Spartan discipline; and again in the evening after school hours. When the young tutor arrived in the dark of the winter mornings, and found his little pupil, scarcely dressed, peeping out of her room, he used to snatch her up in his arms, and carry her to the door, to name to her the stars shining in the cold firmament, hours before dawn; and when the lessons were over, he set the child up on the table at which they had been pursuing their studies, and taught her logic, to the great tribulation of the household, in which the little philosopher pushed her inquiries into the puzzling metaphysics of life. The greatest affection sprang up, as was natural, between the child and her young teacher, whose heart at all times of his life was always open to children. After the lapse of all these years, their companionship looks both pathetic and amusing. A life-long friendship sprang out of that early connection. The pupil, with all the enthusiasm of childhood, believed everything possible to the mind which gave its first impulse to her own; and the teacher never lost the affectionate, indulgent love with which the little woman, thus confided to his boyish care, inspired him. Their intercourse did not have the romantic conclusion it might have been supposed likely to end in; but, as a friendship, existed unbroken through all kinds of vicissitudes; and even through entire separation, disapproval, and outward estrangement, to the end of Irving's life.

When the lessons were over it was a rule that the young teacher should leave a daily report of his pupil's progress; when, alas, that report was *pessime*, the little girl was punished. One day he paused long before putting his sentence upon paper. The culprit sat on the table, small, downcast, and conscious of failure. The preceptor lingered remorsefully over his verdict, wavering between justice and mercy. At last he looked up at her with pitiful looks. "Jane, my heart is broken!" cried the sympathetic tutor, "but I *must* tell the truth;" and with reluctant pen he wrote the dread deliverance, *pessime!* The small offender doubtless forgot the penalty that followed; but she has not yet forgotten the compassionate dilemma in which truth was the unwilling conqueror.

The youth who entered his house under such circumstances

soon became a favourite guest at the fireside of the doctor, who, himself a man of education and intelligence, and of that disposition which makes men beloved, was not slow to find out the great qualities of his young visitor. There are some men who seem born to the inalienable good fortune of lighting upon the best people—"the most worthy," according to Irving's own expression long afterwards—wherever they go. Irving's happiness in this way began at Haddington. The doctor's wife seems to have been one of those fair, sweet women whose remembrance lasts longer than greatness. There is no charm of beauty more delightful than that fragrance of it which lingers for generations in the place where it has been an unconsciously refining and tender influence. The Annandale youth came into a little world of humanizing graces when he entered that atmosphere; and it was only natural that he should retain the warmest recollection of it throughout his life. It must have been of countless benefit to him in this early stage of his career. The main quality in himself which struck observers was—in strong and strange contradiction to the extreme devotion of *belief* manifested in his latter years—the critical and almost sceptical tendency of his mind, impatient of superficial "received truths," and eager for proof and demonstration of everything. Perhaps mathematics, which then reigned paramount in his mind, were to blame; he was as anxious to discuss, to prove and disprove, as a Scotch student fresh from college is naturally disposed to be. It was a peculiarity natural to his age and condition; and as his language was always inclined to the superlative, and his feelings invariably took part in every matter which commended itself to his mind, it is probable that this inclination showed with a certain exaggeration to surrounding eyes. "This youth will scrape a hole in everything he is called on to believe," said the doctor;—a strange prophecy, looking at it by that light of events which unfold so many unthought-of meanings in all predictions.

In the mean time he made himself popular in the town; and apart from the delightful vignette above, appears in all his natural picturesque individuality in other recollections. The young master of the mathematical school commended himself to the hearts of those whose sons he had quickened out of dunces into intelligent prize-winning pupils. He was young and poor, and in a humble position still; but he attracted the warm admiration of the boys, and that enthusiasm which only young creatures in the early blush of existence can entertain for their elders. The means by which he won the hearts of those lads is simple and apparent enough. Though he was

severe and peremptory in school,—"a sad tyrant," somebody says,—out of doors he had just that delightful mixture of superior wisdom, yet equal innocence,—that junction of the teacher and the companion which is irresistible to all generous young people. Enthusiastic in his mathematical studies as he had come from Edinburgh, and loving the open air as became an Annandale lad of eighteen, he contrived to connect science and recreation in a social brotherly fashion quite his own. "Having the use of some fine instruments," says one of his pupils, Patrick Sheriff, Esq., of Haddington, "he devoted many of his school holidays to the measuring of heights and distances in the surrounding neighbourhood, and taking the altitudes of heavenly bodies. Upon such occasions he was invariably accompanied by several of his pupils." When the state of the atmosphere, or any other obstacle, interrupted the particular object of the day's excursion, the young teacher readily and joyfully diverged into the athletic games in which he excelled; and with the scientific instruments standing harmlessly by, enjoyed his holiday as well as if everything had been favourable for their use.

"Being an excellent walker," continues the gentleman already quoted, "all his excursions were made on foot. Upon one occasion when Dr Chalmers, then rising into fame, was announced to preach in St George's, Edinburgh, upon a summer week-day evening, Irving set out from Haddington after school-hours, accompanied by several of his pupils, and returned the same night, accomplishing a distance of about thirty-five miles without any other rest than what was obtained in church." The fatigue of this long walk was enlivened when the little party arrived at the church by a little outbreak of imperious pugnacity, not, perhaps, quite seemly in such a place, but characteristic enough. Tired with their walk, the boys and their youthful leader made their way up to the gallery of the church, where they directed their steps towards one particular pew which was quite unoccupied. Their entrance into the vacant place was, however, stopped by a man, who stretched his arm across the pew and announced that it was engaged. Irving remonstrated, and represented that at such a time all the seats were open to the public, but without effect. At last his patience gave way; and raising his hand he exclaimed, evidently with all his natural magniloquence of voice and gesture, "Remove your arm, or I will shatter it in pieces!" His astonished opponent fell back in utter dismay, like Mrs Siddons' shopman, and made a precipitate retreat, while the rejoicing boys took possession of the pew. Thus, for the first time,

Irving and Chalmers were brought, if not together, at least into the same assembly. The great preacher knew nothing of the lad who had come nearly eighteen miles to hear him preach, and sat resting his mighty youthful limbs in the seat from which he had driven his enemy. Such glimpses are curious and full of interest, especially in remembrance of other days which awaited Chalmers and Irving in that same church of St George.

To return to Haddington, however; Irving not only established his place as a warm and life-long friend in the house of the doctor, but made his way into the homes and society of many of the worthy inhabitants of the little town. Among those who had children at the Mathematical School and opened his house to the teacher, was Gilbert Burns, the brother of the poet, with whom he is said to have had some degree of intimacy; and though the humble position of Dominie did not give him a very high place in the social scale, and restricted his friendships within the circle of those whose sons he educated, there were a sufficiently large number of the latter to make their young preceptor known and received at most of the good houses in Haddington.

"Social supper parties," says Mr Alexander Inglis, once a resident in Haddington, who has kindly furnished me with some recollections of this period, "were much the custom at this time in Haddington, and the hospitalities generally extended far into the night. At these social meetings Irving was occasionally in the habit of broaching some of his singular opinions about the high destinies of the human race in heaven, where the saints were not only to be made 'kings and priests unto God,' but were to rule and judge angels. Dr Lorimer (the senior minister of the town) used to hint that there were many more profitable and useful subjects in the New Testament for a divinity student to occupy his thoughts about than such speculations; but Irving was not to be put down in this way. 'Dare either you or I deprive God of the glory and thanks due to his name, for this exceeding great reward?' cried the impetuous young man, according to the report of his old friend: the good doctor's ready reply was, 'Well, well, my dear friend, both you and I can be saved without knowing about that.'"

Here Irving also made the acquaintance of Mr Stewart, then minister of Bolton, afterwards Dr Stewart, of Erskine, who was himself the subject of a sufficiently romantic story. This gentleman had been a medical man, and in that capacity had cured the daughter of a Scotch nobleman of sup-

posed consumption. The physician and patient, after the most approved principles of poetical justice, fell in love with each other and married, and the former changed his profession, and becoming a minister, settled down in the parish of Bolton, and became doubly useful to his people and the neighbourhood in his double capacity. He too had been able to discern in some degree those qualities of mind and heart, which, despite his vehement speech and impatience, and love of argumentation, showed themselves in the young schoolmaster. In this Manse of Bolton Irving was in the habit of spending his Saturdays, along with a young fellow-student of his own, Mr Story, afterwards of Rosneath. Nor was he without society of his own age and standing. In those days, when long walks were habitual to everybody, Haddington was within reach of Edinburgh; perhaps more distinctly within reach than now, when, instead of the long pleasant summer afternoon walk, costing nothing, the rapid railway, with inevitable shillings and sixpences, and fixed hours of coming and going, does away with distance, yet magnifies the walk into a journey. On Saturdays and holidays there was no lack of visitors. A tide of eager young life palpitated about the teacher-student, even in that retirement,—life of a wonderfully different fashion from that which issues from English universities; confined to limits much more narrow, and bound to practical necessities; a world more hard and real. Among these comrades there were perhaps scarcely two or three individuals whose studies were not professional; and among the professional students only a small number who were not, like Irving himself, taxing their youthful strength to procure the means of prosecuting their studies.

His independence seems now to have been complete. In his humble Haddington lodgings he was no longer indebted even for his oatmeal and cheese to the home household, but had set out manful and early on the road of life for himself. Henceforward Edward's expenses did not rank among the cares of the Annan home. At seventeen and a half the young man took up his own burden without a word or a token of complaint; and ever after bore it courageously through all discouragements and trials, never breaking down or falling back upon the love, which, notwithstanding, his stout heart always trusted in. Neither genius, nor that temperament of genius, impassioned and visionary, which he possessed to a large extent, weakened his performance of this first duty which manifested itself to his eyes; and he seems to have accepted his lot with a certain noble simplicity, neither resenting it, nor quarrelling with those

whom circumstances made temporarily his superiors. Either people did not ill-use him, or he had some secret power of endurance which turns ill-usage aside. At all events, it is certain that the agonies of the sensitive, not sufficiently respected tutor, or the commotions of the indignant one, have no place whatever in Irving's youthful life. When the Haddington corporation, not likely to be the most considerate masters in the world, afflicted their young schoolmaster, it is to be supposed that he blazed up at them manfully, and got done with it. At least he has no complaints to make, or old slights to remember; nor does it seem that he ever sulked at his humble position or close labours at any time in his life.

Irving remained two years at Haddington, during which time he began that singular grave pretence of theological education which is called "partial" study in the Divinity Hall. From the little Haddington school he was promoted, always with the good offices of Sir John Leslie, who seems to have had a sincere kindness for him, to the mastership of a newly established academy in Kirkcaldy; in which place he spent a number of years, and decided various important matters deeply concerning his future life.

CHAPTER IV.

KIRKCALDY.

"The lang town of Kirkcaldy" extends along the northern side of the Firth of Forth, and is one of the most important of that long line of little towns—fishing, weaving, trading centres of local activity,—which gleam along the margin of Fife, and help to make an abrupt but important edge to the golden fertile fringe which, according to a pretty, antique description, adorns the "russet mantle" of that characteristic county. These little towns extend in a scattered, broken line, downward from Queensferry, till the coast rounds off into St Andrew's Bay; and are full of a busy yet leisurely industry, sometimes quickened almost into the restless pulse of trade. Kirkcaldy earned its title of the "lang town" from the prolonged line of its single street, running parallel to the shore for rather more than a mile, and at that time had not widened into proportioned breadth, nor invested itself with tiny suburbs

and the body of scattered population which now gives it importance. In the year 1812 there was no school in this flourishing and comfortable place, except the parish school, with its confusion of ranks and profound Republicanism of letters, where boys and girls of all classes were rudely drilled into the common elements of education, with such climaxes of Latin and mathematics as were practicable. The professional people of Kirkcaldy, headed by the minister, who had himself a large family to educate, and the well-to-do shopkeepers and householders of the place, determined, accordingly, upon the establishment of a new school, of higher pretensions, and Edward Irving was selected as its first master. Two rooms in a central "wynd," opening into each other, with a tiny class-room attached—now occupied by a humble schoolmaster, who points to his worm-eaten wooden desks as being those used by "the great Mr Irving"—were simply fitted up into the new academy.

Without any accessories to command respect, in a humble locality, with a cobbler's hutch in the sunk storey beneath, and common houses crowding round, the new institution, notwithstanding, impressed respect upon the town, and soon became important. Boys and girls, as was usual, sat together at those brown oaken desks without the least separation, and pursued their studies together with mutual rivalry. For some time Irving managed them alone, but afterwards had an assistant, and in this employment remained for seven years, and had the training of a generation in his hands. The recollection of him is still fresh in the town; his picturesque looks, his odd ways, his severities, his kindnesses, the distinct individuality of the man. Here that title which was afterwards to be the popular designation of a religious community came into active playful use, long and innocently antedating its more permanent meaning, and the academy scholars distinguished each other as "Irvingites,"—a special and affectionate bond of fraternity. He was now twenty, and had attained his full height, which some say was two, and some four, inches over six feet; his appearance was noble and remarkable to a high degree, his features fine, his figure, in its great height, fully developed and vigorous; the only drawback to his good looks being the defect in his eye, which, with so many and great advantages to counterbalance it, seems rather to have given piquancy to his face than to have lessened its attraction. Such a figure attracted universal attention: he could not pass through a village without being remarked and gazed after; and some of his Kirkcaldy pupils remember the moment when they first saw

him, with the clearness which marks, not an ordinary meeting, but an event. This recollection is perhaps assisted by the fact, that though a divinity student, already overshadowed by the needful gravity of the priesthood, and in present possession of all the importance of a "Dominie," he had no such solemn regard to dress as afterwards became one of his peculiarities, but made his appearance in Kirkcaldy in a morning coat made of some *set* of tartan in which red predominated, to the admiration of all beholders.

A young man of twenty, with the full charge of a large number of boys and girls, in a limited space, and undertaking all the items of a miscellaneous education, no doubt needed the assistance of a somewhat rigorous discipline, and it is evident that he used its help with much freedom. Sounds were heard now and then proceeding from the school-room which roused the pity and indignation of the audience of neighbours out of doors. One of these, a joiner, deacon of his trade, and a man of great strength, is reported to have appeared one day, with his shirt-sleeves rolled up to his elbows and an axe on his shoulder, at the door of the school-room, asking, "Do ye want a hand* the day, Mr Irving?" with dreadful irony. Another ludicrous mistake testifies to the general notion that careless scholars occasionally got somewhat hard measure from the young master. Some good men loitering about their gardens, in the neighbourhood of the "academy," heard outcries which alarmed them; and, convinced that murder was being accomplished in the school, set off to save the victim; but discovered, to their great discomfiture, that the cries which had attracted their sympathy came from an unfortunate animal under the hands of a butcher, and not from a tortured schoolboy. These severe measures, however, by no means obliterate the pleasanter recollection with which Irving's pupils recall his reign at the academy. It was not in his nature to work among even a set of school-boys without identifying himself with them, and carrying them with *him* into all the occupations and amusements which they could possibly be made to bear a share in. On the holidays the young teacher might be seen with both boys and girls in his train, issuing forth to the fields with such scientific instruments as he could command, giving them lessons in mensuration and surveying, which, half in sport and half in earnest, doubtless, were not without their use to the fortunate lads thus promoted to share his hours of leisure. The same lads went with him to the Firth, where he

* Anglicè—*assistance*, a helper.

renewed those feats of swimming which had distinguished him on the Solway; and, sometimes with an urchin on his shoulder, sometimes holding an oar or a rope to sustain the more advanced, sometimes lending the aid of his own vigorous arm, the young Hercules taught, or endeavoured to teach, his pupils to be as fearless in the water as himself. If he might sometimes happen to be discontented with his occupation, as was very possible, it never occurred to Irving to evidence that feeling by doing just as little as could be demanded of him. Exactly the reverse was the impulse of his generous, single-minded nature. He went into it with all the fresh, natural fulness of his heart. He never seems to have attempted making any division of himself. And this is no picture of an interesting student compelled to turn aside from his studies by the necessity of maintaining himself—and if not resentful, at least preserving a certain reserve and pathetical injured aspect towards the world, as there are so many; but an entire individual man, full of the highest ambition, yet knowing no possibility of any other course of conduct than that of doing what his hand found to do, with all his heart, as freely as if he had loved the work for its own sake. With such a disposition, he could not even enter into any work without insensibly getting to love it, and spending himself freely, with exuberant volunteer efforts not demanded of him. Under no circumstances was indifference possible to this young man; though, even then, it is very apparent, prophetic visions of a very different audience, and of future possibilities which no one else dreamt of, were with him in the midst of his hearty and cordial labours.

Thus for a circle of years his remarkable figure pervades that little town; seen every day upon the shore, pacing up and down the yellow sands with books and meditations,—the great Firth rolling in at his feet in waves more grand and less impetuous than those of his native Solway; with green islands gleaming in the light, and Arthur's Seat looming out through the Edinburgh smoke in the distance, a moody lion; and many a moonlight night upon the same shore, collecting round him his little band of eager disciples, to point out the stars in their courses, and communicate such poetical elements of astronomy as were congenial to such a scene. These latter meetings were disturbed and brought to a conclusion in a whimsical homely fashion. One season it happened that, on two different occasions when they met, falling stars were seen. Forthwith some of the common people took up the notion that Irving drew down the stars, or at least knew when they were to fall. They accordingly watched for him and his pupils, and pushing

in amongst them with ignorant, half-superstitious curiosity, broke up the little conclave. A curious incident, in which a fanciful observer might see some dim, mystic anticipations of a future not yet revealed even to its hero. Indoors, in his own domain, as the different classes went on with their lessons, he moved about in perpetual activity, seldom sitting down, and always fully intent upon the progress of his flock. Now and then he gave them a holiday, on condition of receiving afterwards an essay describing how they had spent their time—receiving in return some amusing productions largely taken up with birds' nesting and other such exploits of rustic boyhood. Both French and Italian, in addition to the steadier routine of Latin and mathematics, seem to have been attempted by the ardent young teacher; and his own class read Milton with him, learning large portions of *Paradise Lost* by heart. "Wherever the sense seemed involved, the pupils were required to re-arrange the sentence and give it in prose. This implied a thorough understanding of the passage and appreciation of its meaning." Altogether a system of education of a lofty optimist character, quite as rare and unusual in the present day as at that time. It is said that one of his older pupils came on one occasion to this same Milton Class before the arrival of her companions, and on reaching the door of the class-room, found Irving alone, reciting to himself one of the speeches of Satan, with so much emphasis and so gloomy a countenance, that the terrified girl, unable to conceal her fright, fled precipitately. Some of his pupils—and among these, one or two girls—came to high proficiency in the mathematical studies, which were specially dear to their young instructor; and—much apart from mathematics—Irving so managed to impress his spirit upon the lads under his charge, that the common conjunction of boys and girls in this school became the means of raising a certain chivalrous spirit, not naturally abounding among school-boys, in Kirkcaldy and its academy. That spirit of chivalry which, under the form of respect to women, embodies the truest magnanimous sentiment of strength, rose involuntarily among the youths commanded by such a leader. They learned to suspend their very snow-ball *bickers* till the girls had passed out of harm's way; and awing the less fortunate *gamins* of the little town by their sturdy championship, made the name of "an academy lassie" a defence against all annoyance. The merest snowball directed against the sacred person of one of these budding women was avenged by the generous zeal of the "Irvingites." The girls perhaps on their side were not equally considerate, but won prizes over the heads of their stronger

associates with no compunction, and took their full share of the labours, though scarcely of the penalties of the school. Amusing anecdotes of the friendship existing between the teacher and his pupils are told on all sides: his patience and consideration in childish disasters, and prompt activity when accidents occurred; and even his readiness to be joked with when times were propitious. It was necessary to secure beforehand, however, that times *were* propitious. On one such sunshiny occasion some of the boys propounded the old stock riddle about the seven wives with their stock of cats and kits "whom I met going to St Ives"—and the whole school looked on, convulsed with secret titterings, while their simple-minded master went on jotting down upon his black board in visible figures the repeated sevens of that tricky composition. Their floggings do not seem to have much damped the spirit of the Kirkcaldy boys, or diminished their confidence in their teacher.

During the early part of Irving's residence in Kirkcaldy he was still a partial student at the Divinity Hall. During the first three winters he had to go over to Edinburgh now and then, to deliver the discourses which were necessary, in order to keep up his standing as a student. "On these occasions," says the lady from whose notes the chief details of his Kirkcaldy history are taken, "to insure his pupils losing as little as possible, he used to ask them to meet him at the school at six, or half-past-six, in the morning. This arrangement enabled him to go over the most important of the lessons before the hour at which the fly started to meet the passage-boat at Kinghorn"—that being, before the age of steamers, the most rapid conveyance between Fife and Edinburgh. On his return from one such expedition, he himself describes how, "in fear of a tedious passage across the ferry under night, I requested from a friend of mine in Edinburgh a book, which, by combining instruction with amusement, might at once turn to account the time, and relieve the tiresomeness of the voyage." The book was *Rasselas;* and was afterwards sent, with an amusingly elaborate, schoolmaster note, to two young ladies, whom the young teacher (who afterwards made one of them his wife) addresses as "my much-respected pupils." The friend who lent the book desired it to be given as a prize to the best scholar in the school, and having been present at the examination, distinguished these two, without being able to decide between them; but at the same time deprecated any mention of himself on account of the trifling value of his gift. Whereupon Irving adds, with quaint antique solemnity, that

"it was not the worth but the honour which should be regarded: that the conquerors of Greece and Rome reckoned themselves more honoured by the laurel crown than if they had enjoyed the splendid pomp of the noblest triumph;" and concludes by sending the book to both, so that "by making the present mutual, it will not only be a testimonial of your progress, but also of that attachment which I hope will ripen into cordial friendship; and which it is the more pleasant to observe as its place is too often occupied by jealousy and envy."

Out of this exemplary beginning, however, sprang important conclusions. Though it was only after a distance of long years and much separation, the usual vicissitudes of youthful life, and all the lingering delays of a classical probation, that the engagement was completed, Irving found his mate in Fifeshire. Not long after she had ceased to be his pupil he became engaged to Isabella Martin, the eldest daughter of the parish minister of Kirkcaldy. She was of a clerical race, an hereditary "daughter of the Manse," according to the affectionate popular designation, and of a name already in some degree known to fame in the person of Dr Martin, of Monimail, her grandfather, who survived long enough to baptize and bless his great-grandchildren—who had some local poetical reputation in his day, and whom the grateful painter, entitled in Scotland "our immortal Wilkie," has commemorated as having helped his early struggles into fame by the valuable gift of two lay figures: and of David Martin, his brother, first proprietor of the said lay figures, whose admirable portraits are well known. Her father, the Rev. John Martin, was an admirable type of the class to which he belonged—an irreproachable parish priest, of respectable learning and talents and deep piety, living a domestic patriarchal life in the midst of the little community under his charge, fully subject to their observation and criticism, but without any rival in his position or influence; bringing up his many children among them, and spending his active days in all that fatherly close supervision of morals and manners which distinguished and became the old hereditary ministers of Scotland. He was of the party then called "wild" or "high-flyers," in opposition to the "Moderates," who formed the majority of the Church, and whose flight was certainly low enough to put them in little hazard from any skyey influences. Such a man in those days exercised over the bulk of his people an influence which, perhaps, no man in any position exercises now—and in which the special regard of the really religious portion of his flock only put a more fervent climax

upon the traditionary respect of the universal people, always ready, when he was worthy of it, to yield to the traditionary sway of the minister, though equally ready to jeer at and scorn him when he was not, with a contempt increased by their national appreciation of the importance of his office. To the house of this good man Irving had early obtained access, the Manse children in a goodly number being among his scholars, and the Manse itself forming the natural centre of all lay professors of literature in a region which had too many sloops and looms on hand to be greatly attracted that way. The family in this Manse of Kirkcaldy, which afterwards became so closely related to him, and the younger members of which understood him all the better that their minds had been formed and developed under his instruction, were, during all his after life, Irving's fast friends, accompanying him, not with concurrence or agreement certainly, but with faithful affection and kindness to the very edge of the grave.

He had now completed his necessary tale of collegiate sessions, having been, in the partial and irregular way necessitated by his other occupations, in attendance at the Divinity Hall for six long winters. He was now subjected to the "trials for license," which Presbyterian precautions require. "They are now taken to the severest trials by the Presbytery of the Church in those bounds where they reside," he himself describes with loving boastfulness, proud of the severities of the Church from which he never could separate his heart,—"and circular letters are sent to all the presbyters in that district, in order that objections may be taken against him who would have the honour, and take upon himself the trust, of preaching Christ. If no objections are offered, they proceed to make trial of his attainments in all things necessary for the ministry; his knowledge, his piety, his learning, and his character. They prescribe to him five several discourses; one an 'Exegesis,' in Latin, to discover his knowledge in that language; another an exercise in Greek criticism, to discover his knowledge in sacred literature; another a homily; another a discourse to the clergy, to know his gifts in expounding the Scriptures; another a sermon, to know his gifts in preaching to the people. These trials last half a year; and being found sufficient, he is permitted to preach the Gospel among the churches. But he is not yet ordained, for our Church ordaineth no man without a flock."

It is thus that Irving, when at the height of his fame, and opening the great new church built for him in London, affectionately vaunts the carefulness of his ecclesiastical mother.

He went through his "trials" in the early part of the year 1815, and was fully licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy in the June of that year; and "exercised his gift," according to the old Scotch expression, thereafter in Kirkcaldy, and other places, with no great amount of popular appreciation. A humorous description of his first sermon, preached in Annan, is given by an early friend. The "haill toun," profoundly critical and much interested, turned out to hear him; even his ancient teachers, with solemn brows, came out to sit in judgment on Edward's sermon. A certain excitement of interest, unusual to that humdrum atmosphere, thrilled through the building. When the sermon was in full current, some incautious movement of the young preacher tilted aside the great Bible, and the sermon itself, that direful "paper" which Scotch congregations hold in high despite, dropped out bodily, and fluttered down upon the precentor's desk underneath. A perfect rustle of excitement ran through the church; here was an unhoped-for crisis!—what would the neophyte do now? The young preacher calmly stooped his great figure over the pulpit, grasped the manuscript as it lay, broadways, crushed it up in his great hand, thrust it into a pocket, and went on as fluently as before. There does not exist a congregation in Scotland which that act would not have taken by storm. His success was triumphant. To criticize a man so visibly independent of "the paper" would have been presumption indeed.

In Kirkcaldy, however, his appearances neither excited such interest, nor were attended by any such fortunate accident. The people listened doubtfully to those thunder-strains which echoed over their heads, and which were certainly not like Dr Martin's sermons. They could not tell what to make of discourses so strangely different from the discourses of other orthodox young probationers, and doubtless the style was still unformed, and had not yet attained that rhythm and music which would not have passed unnoticed even in Kirkcaldy; yet the common complaint alleged against it was perfectly characteristic. "He had ower muckle gran'ner," the good people said, with disturbed looks. Too much grandeur! most true, but most singular of criticisms! A certain baker, Beveridge by name (let us hand it down to such immortality as can be referred by this record), rudely, with Scotch irreverence for the place in which he was, kicked his pew-door open and bounced forth out of the church, when the lofty head of the young schoolmaster was seen in the pulpit; and the same church which, a few years after, was disastrously crowded

with hearers coming far and near at the name of the great preacher, thinned out of its ordinary attendance in those early days when he was to supply Dr Martin's place. He got no credit and little encouragement in what was, after all, his real vocation. The fervent beginnings of his eloquence were thrown back cold upon his heart: no eye in his audience making response to that imperfect splendid voice of half-developed genius which was so wonderfully distinct from the common-place shrills of ordinary pulpit declamation which they listened to and relished. He had "ower muckle gran'ner" for the good people of Kirkcaldy. His chaotic splendours disconcerted them; and no doubt there was a certain justice in the general voice. A style so rich and splendid might very well have sounded turgid or bombastic in youth, before the harmonious key-note had been found.

He lingered three years after his license as a preacher, in his schoolmaster's desk; silent, listening to other preachers, not always with much edification; noting how the people to whom his own "unacceptableness" was apparent, relished the platitudes of meaner men: laying in unconsciously a certain scorn and intolerance of those limited pretenders to wisdom whose sham or borrowed coin had fuller currency than his own virgin gold; and as he sat in a position from which he could at once watch the pulpit and the audience, with thoughts on this momentous and often-discussed subject taking gradual form in his mind, he asked himself the reasons of his own apparent failure. He asked himself a still deeper question, whether this was the preaching of Paul and his brother apostles? This process of thought is apparent throughout all his works, and above all in the *Orations* with which he first burst upon the world. Those three years of slow successive Sundays, now and then interrupted by an occasional appearance in the pulpit hailed by no gracious looks, gave the silent listener, whose vocation it was to preach, deep insight into, and deeper impatience of, the common conventionalities of the pulpit.

During this period of his life, his personal religious sentiments are not very apparent, nor is there any record, so far as I have been able to ascertain, of such a critical moment in his life as those which have formed the turning point of so many minds. He was spotless in manners and morals at all times; but not without faults of temper; and was specially distinguished by a certain cheerful, cordial pugnacity, and readiness, when occasion called for it, to adopt a boldly offensive line of tactics in support of his own dignity and independence, or those of his class; partly stimulated thereto, doubtless, by

the great personal strength which could no more consent to remain inactive than any other of his gifts. In one of his many walking excursions, for example, he and his companion came to a little roadside inn, where there was but one sitting-room, of a very homely description. The young men left their coats and knapsacks in this room, ordered dinner, and went out to investigate the neighbourhood while it was getting ready. On their return, however, they found the room occupied by a party of tourists, the only table filled, their dinner forestalled, and their belongings huddled into a corner. Remonstrances were unavailing; the intruders not only insisted that they had a right to retain possession of the room, but resisted the entrance of the hungry and tired pedestrians, and would neither share the table nor the apartment. When fair means were no longer practicable, Irving pushed forward to the window, and threw it wide open; then, turning towards the company, all ready for action, gravely addressed his comrade:—"Will you toss out or knock down?"—a business-like inquiry, which, according to the story, changed with great rapidity the aspect of affairs. Other anecdotes not unsimilar might be quoted. "In the year 1816," says Dr Grierson, "the 42nd Regiment, having returned after Waterloo, was employed to line the streets of Edinburgh on the day when, at the opening of the General Assembly, the Royal Commissioner proceeded in state from the reception hall in Hunter Square, to St Giles's. Standing in front of the Grenadier Company, Irving said to me, pointing to the tallest man among them, 'Do you see that fellow? I should like to meet him in a dark entry.' 'For what reason?' I inquired. 'Just,' said he, 'that I might find out what amount of drubbing I could bear.'"

The meeting of Assembly here referred to was enlivened by a momentary specimen of the young man's muscular power. It is impossible, out of Scotland, to form any idea of what was then the interest excited by the General Assembly, which had been for centuries the national parliament of exclusive Scottish principles and feelings. The late Lord Cockburn, in his *Memorials*, as well as in his Life of Lord Jeffrey, has reproduced, in slight but graphic sketches, the characteristic aspect of that unique ecclesiastical body. Scotch churchmen may naturally enough object to the friendly but not reverential description of the brilliant lawyer; but it is almost the only popular picture of the most national of all Scotch institutions which can be referred to. At the period of which we are now speaking, there was scarcely any dissent in the country; the body of the nation held tenaciously by the Kirk, laymen of the

highest class shared in its deliberations, and the most distinguished lawyers of the Scotch bar pleaded in its judicial courts. A great discussion in the Assembly was as interesting to Edinburgh as a great debate in Parliament would be in London to-day; and the interest, and even excitement, which attended this yearly Convocation, had taken a stimulus from the growing stir of external life, and from the still more important growth of existence within. The time was critical for every existing institution. The Church, long dormant, was, like other organizations, beginning to thrill with a new force, against which all the slumbrous past arrayed itself; and the Scotch metropolis was stirred with universal emotion to see the new act of that world-long drama which is renewed from age to age in every church and country; that struggle in which, once in a century at least, indifference and common usage are brought to bay by the new life rising against them, and, roused at last, fight for their sluggish existence with such powers as they are able to muster. At such a moment occurred the famous "Debate on Pluralities," which holds an important place in the modern history of the Scotch Church—a debate in which "Chalmers of Kilmany," not long before zealously ambitious to hold such pluralities in his own person, but who had since gone through that mysterious and wonderful change in his views, which, when clearly honest and undoubted, no human audience can refuse to be interested in, was to lead the attack. The pluralities in question were such as might awaken the smiles of the richer establishment on the other side of the Tweed, where the word bears a more important meaning. The widest extent of pluralities possible to a Scotch clergyman was that of holding a professor's chair in conjunction with his pulpit and parochial duties. This question, which at the time, from the parties and principle involved, interested everybody, had naturally a double interest for the future ministers of the Church. The probationers and students of divinity were eager to gain admittance. The Assembly sat in a portion of St Giles's, known by the name of the Old Assembly Aisle, one of the quaint sub-divisions into which that church, like Glasgow Cathedral in former days, has been partitioned for congregational use and convenience, and where the narrow pews and deep steep galleries, thrust in between the lofty pillars, are as much out of keeping with those pillars themselves as is the white-washed blank of wall, despoiled of its tombs and altars, under the calm height of the vault above. "The Old Assembly Aisle," says the gentleman already quoted, "afforded but very limited accommodation, and the students' gallery was un-

derstood to be occupied by some persons not of their body. At this Irving felt great indignation. He remonstrated with the door-keeper, but in vain; he demanded entrance for himself and others who were excluded; and when no attention was, or perhaps could be, paid by that official, he put his shoulder to the narrow door, and, applying his Herculean strength to it, fairly wrenched it off its hinges! The crash interrupted the proceedings of the court, and produced both surprise and diversion, but no redress of grievances."

As the time of his probation lengthened out, it is probable that Irving, with all his inclinations rising towards the profession which the Church had now solemnly sanctioned his choice of, and pronounced him capable for, became very weary of his schoolmaster life. Another school, in opposition to his, was set up in the town, not apparently from any distaste towards him, but from the advancing desire for liberal education which his own long apprenticeship in Kirkcaldy must have fostered; a school which—singular luck for the little Fife seaport—secured the early services of Thomas Carlyle. Changes too, and attempts at widening out his limited possibilities, appear in his own life. To increase the profits of his post,—which however of themselves appear to have been considerable, as such matters go,—Irving made an attempt to receive private pupils, who were to attend his school and live under his own charge. For this purpose, he took up his abode in the Abbotshall school-house, at one extremity of the town of Kirkcaldy, but in another parish, the parish schoolmaster of which was, like himself, a candidate for the Church. The house was the upper flat of the building occupied as a school, and was more commodious than the majority of schoolmasters' houses. A nobler Marina could not be than the broad terrace overlooking the Firth, but totally unappropriated to any uses of fashion or visitors, upon which stands the school-house of Abbotshall, beholding from its range of windows a wide landscape, always interesting, and often splendid, the Firth with all its islands, the distant spires and heights of Edinburgh, and the green Lothian coast with its bays and hills. Whether the pupils were slow to come, or the conjoint household did not answer, or Irving himself tired of the experiment, does not appear; but it was soon given up, and does not seem to have had any success. "Ay, Mr Irving once lived here—he was a great mathematician," says the present incumbent, complacent among his gooseberry bushes. Spoken in that sunny garden, such words throw back and set aside the years which have made little change on anything but man. One forgets how

his sun rose to noon, and at noon disastrously went down, carrying with it a world of hopes; a mist of distance conceals the brilliant interval between this homely house and the Glasgow Cathedral crypt. Here, where once he lived, it is not the great preacher, the prophet and wonder of an age, whose shadow lingers on the kindly soil. He was master of Kirkcaldy Academy in those days. He was "a great mathematician;" the glory of an after career, foreign to the school-room, has not rubbed out that impression from the mind of his humble successor on the spot where as yet he had no other fame.

CHAPTER V.

AFLOAT ON THE WORLD.

In 1818, when he had been seven years in Kirkcaldy, and had now reached the maturity of his twenty-sixth year, Irving finally left his school and gave up teaching. The position seems to have been growing irksome to him for some time before. It was not his profession; and he was wasting the early summer of his life in work which, however cordially he embraced it, was not the best work for such a man. His assistants too, on whom as the school increased he had to depend, brought him into other complications; and he was now no longer a youth lingering at the beginning of his career, but a man eager to enter the arena where so many others less worthy were contending for the prize; and not only so, but a man engaged to be married, to whom nature indicated the necessity of fixing himself permanently in life. Moved by the rising excitement of all these thoughts, and apparently not without means of maintaining himself for some time, while he saw what work the world might have for him to do, he finally gave up the Kirkcaldy Academy in the summer of 1818, and resolving henceforward to devote himself to his own profession alone, came to Edinburgh, where he took lodgings in Bristo Street, a locality still frequented by students. Here he was near the college, and in the centre of all that mental activity from which he had been separated in the drowsy retirement of the country town. He entered largely and gladly into all academical pursuits. He renewed his acquaintance with friends who had been with him in his early college days; or whom he had met in his hurried visits to Edinburgh, while lingering through his tedious

"partial" sessions in the Divinity Hall; and seems to have heartily set to work to increase his own attainments, and make himself better qualified for whatsoever post he might be called to. It is not a brilliant period in the young man's life. He presents himself to us in the aspect of an unsuccessful probationer, a figure never rare in Scotland; a man upon whom no sunshine of patronage shone, and whom just as little had the popular eye found out or fixed upon; whose services were unsolicited either by friendly ministers or vacant congregations—a man fully licensed and qualified to preach, whom nobody cared to hear. With the conviction strong in his mind that this was his appointed function in the world, and with a consciousness of having pondered the whole matter much more deeply than is usual with young preachers, there rose before Irving the immovable barrier of unsuccess;—not failure; he had never found means to try his powers sufficiently for failure—even that might have been less hard to bear than the blank of indifference and "unacceptability" which he had now to endure. His services were not required in the world; the profession for which, by the labours of so many years, he had slowly qualified himself, hung in his hands, an idle capability of which nothing came. Yet the pause at first seems to have been grateful. He had nothing to do—but at all events he had escaped from long toiling at a trade which was not his.

Accordingly, he attended several classes in the college during the winter of 1818-19; among which were Chemistry and Natural History. "He prosecuted these studies," says a fellow-student, "at least in some of their branches, with great delight;" although in a note written at this period to Mr Gordon, afterwards Dr Gordon of Edinburgh, he confesses, while mentioning that he had been studying mineralogy, "that he had learned from it as little about the structure of the earth as he could have learned about the blessed Gospel by examining the book of kittle* Chronicles!" He was also much occupied with the modern languages; French and Italian especially. These were before the days of Teutonic enthusiasm; but Irving seems to have had a pleasure in, and faculty for, acquiring languages, as was testified by his rapid acquirement of Spanish at an after period of his life.

In the reviving glow of intellectual life, his long pondering upon the uses of the pulpit came to a distinct issue. He announced his intention of burning all his existing sermons, and beginning on a new system: an intention which was remorselessly carried out. Those prelections which the youth had

* Difficult, puzzling.

delivered from year to year in the Divinity Hall, and those discourses which the Kirkcaldy parishioners had despised, and Beveridge the baker had boldly escaped from hearing, were sacrificed in this true *auto-da-fé*. No doubt it was a fit and wise holocaust. Sacrificing all his youthful conventionalities and speculations, Irving, at six-and-twenty, began to compose what he was to address to such imaginary hearers as he himself had been in Kirkcaldy church. The wonderful fame which flashed upon him whenever he stood forth single before the world, takes a certain explanation even beyond the perennial explanation of all wonders which lies in genius, from this fact. For the four silent years during which he had possessed the right to speak, other people had been addressing him out of Dr Martin's pulpit; all the ordinary round of argument and exhortation had been tried in unconscious experiment upon the soul of the great preacher, who sat silent, chafing, yet weighing them all in his heart. He knew where they failed, and how they failed, far more distinctly than reason or even imagination could have taught him. Their tedium, their ineffectiveness, their wasted power and superficial feeling, told all the more strongly upon him because of his consciousness that the place thus occupied was his own fit place, and that he himself had actually something to say; and when the schoolmaster's daily duties were over, and he had time and leisure to turn towards his own full equipment, the result was such as I have just described. Warmed and stimulated by his own experience, he began to write sermons to himself—that impatient, vehement hearer, whose character and intelligence none of the other preachers had studied. Perhaps, in the midst of all the modern outcry against sermons, the preachers of the world might adopt Irving's method with advantage. While he wrote he had always in his eye that brilliant, dissatisfied, restless listener, among the side pews in Kirkcaldy church. He knew to a hair's-breadth what that impatient individual wanted—how much he could bear—how he could be interested, edified, or disgusted. I have no doubt it was one of the great secrets of his after power; and that the sweet breath of popular applause, pleasant though it might have been, would have injured the genius which, in silence, and unacceptableness, and dire prolonged experiment of other people's preaching, came to be its own perennial hearer—the first and deepest critic of its own powers.

While in Edinburgh, and entering into all the pleasures of its congenial intellectual society, Irving met once more the little pupil whose precocious studies he had superintended

at Haddington. He found her a beautiful and vivacious girl, with an affectionate recollection of her old master; and the young man found a natural charm in her society. I record this only for a most characteristic, momentary appearance which he makes in the memory of his pupil. It happened that he, with natural generosity, introduced some of his friends to the same hospitable house. But the generosity of the most liberal stops somewhere. When Irving heard the praises of one of those same friends falling too warmly from the young lady's lips, he could not conceal a little pique and mortification which escaped in spite of him. When this little ebullition was over, the fair culprit turned to leave the room; but had scarcely passed the door when Irving hurried after her, and called, entreating her to return for a moment. When she came back, she found the simple-hearted giant standing penitent to make his confession. "The truth is, I was piqued," said Irving; "I have always been accustomed to fancy that *I* stood highest in your good opinion, and I was jealous to hear you praise another man. I am sorry for what I said just now —that is the truth of it;" and so, not pleased, but penitent and candid, let her go. It is a fair representation of his prevailing characteristic. He could no more have retained what he felt to be a meanness on his mind unconfessed, than he could have persevered in the wrong.

Thus the session—the few busy months of university labours—the long year of expectation and hope, passed over amid many occupations and solacements of friendship. But when the door was closed in the dun-coloured Bristo-street room, where nothing was to be seen from the windows but a dusty street, which might have flourished in any vulgar town in existence, and bore no trace of those enchantments of Edinburgh windows, which make up for long stairs and steep ascents, the young man's prospects were not over-cheerful. He had put forth all his powers of mind and warnings of experience upon his sermons, but the result had not followed his expectation. He was still, after a year's interval, the same unemployed probationer that he had left Kirkcaldy; his money nearly about spent, most likely, and his cogitations not joyful. What he was to do was not clearly apparent. That he was not to be a teacher again seems distinct enough; but whether he was ever to be a preacher on Scottish soil was more than uncertain. When he had shut out the world which would not have him, the young man returned into his solitude, making up his mind, with a grieved surprise which is quite touching and grand in its unthought-of humility, that this gift of his,

after all his labours, was still not the gift which was to prove effectual in his native country. He loved his country with a kind of worship, but still, if she would not have him, it was needful rather to carry what he could do elsewhere, than to lie idle, making no use of those faculties which had to be put to usury according to his Master's commandment. The countryman of Mungo Park and school-fellow of Hugh Clapperton bethought himself.—In all the heathen world which hems Christendom about on every side, was there not room for a missionary according to the apostolic model,—a man without scrip or purse, entering in to whosoever would receive him, and passing on when he had said his message? A missionary, with Exeter Hall expectant behind him, and a due tale of conversions to render year after year, Irving never could have been; but in his despondency and discouragement the youthful thought which had stirred him long ago, returned, as a kind of comfort and hopeful alternative, to his mind. To make his way through the continent, a religious wanderer totally unencumbered with worldly provisions, it was necessary to know the languages of the countries which he had to cross; and the idea refreshed him in the tedium of his long probation. When the arrival of summer dispersed his friends, Irving took refuge among his books, with thoughts of this knight-errantry and chivalrous enterprise swelling above the weariness of sickened hope. It was not the modern type of missionary, going, laden with civilization and a printing press, to clear his little garden in the wilderness. It was the red-cross knight in that armour dinted with the impress of many battle-fields; it was the apostolic messenger, undaunted and solitary, bearing from place to place the Gospel for which he could be content to die. The young man looked abroad on this prospect, and his heart rose. It comforted him when the glow of summer found him, country bred and country loving as he was, still shut up in the shabby world of Bristo Street. "Rejected by the living," he is recorded to have said, "I conversed with the dead." His eyes turned to the east, as was natural. He thought of Persia, it is said, where the Malcolms, his countrymen, from the same vigorous soil of Annandale, were making themselves illustrious; and with grammars and alphabets, with map and history, with the silent fathers of all literature standing by, prepared himself for this old world demonstration of his allegiance and his faith.

Some letters which have lately come into my hands, and of the existence of which I was unaware at the time the above pages were written, lift the veil from this silent period of his

life, and reveal, if not much of his loftier aspirations, at least all the hopeful uncertainty, the suspense, sometimes the depression, always the warm activity and expectations, naturally belonging to such a pause in the young man's existence. Here is a remarkable glimpse into that youthful world, all unaware of its own future, and thinking of terminations widely different from those which time has brought about, which will show how another career, as brilliant and longer than Irving's, took its beginning in the same cloudy regions of uncertainty and unsuccess:—

"Carlyle goes away to-morrow, and Brown the next day. So here I am once more on my own resources, except Dixon, who is [better] fitted to swell the enjoyment of a joyous than to cheer the solitude of a lonely hour. For this Carlyle is better fitted than any one I know. It is very odd, indeed, that he should be sent for want of employment to the country; of course, like every man of talent, he has gathered around this Patmos many a splendid purpose to be fulfilled, and much improvement to be wrought out. 'I have the ends of my thoughts to bring together, which no one can do in this thoughtless scene. I have my views of life to reform, and the whole plan of my conduct to new-model; and into all I have my health to recover. And then once more I shall venture my bark upon the waters of this wide realm, and if she cannot weather it, I shall steer west, and try the waters of another world.' So he reasons and resolves; but surely a worthier destiny awaits him than voluntary exile. And for myself, here I am to remain until further orders—if from the east I am ready, if from the west I am ready, and if from the folk of Fife I am not the less ready. I do not think I shall go for the few weeks with Kinloch. . . . . and I believe, after all, they are rather making their use of me than anything else, but I know not; and it is myself, not them, I have to *fend* for, both temporally and spiritually. God knows how ill I do it; but perhaps in His grace He may defend me till the arrival of a day more pregnant to me with hours of religious improvement.

"I had much more to say of the religious meetings I have been attending, and of the Burgher Synod, and of purposes of a literary kind I am conceiving, but lo! I am at an end with my paper and time, having just enough of both to commend me to the love of your household and to the fellowship of your prayers.

"Your most affectionate friend,

"Edward Irving."

It was while in this condition, and with contending hopes and despairs in his mind, that Irving received a sudden invitation from Dr Andrew Thomson, the minister of St George's, to preach in his pulpit. It would be inconsistent with the loved principles of Presbyterian parity to distinguish even so eminent a man as Dr Andrew Thomson as of the highest clerical rank in Edinburgh; but he really was so, in as far as noble talent, a

brilliant and distinct character, and—not least important—a church in the most fashionable quarter, could make him. With the exception of Dr Chalmers, he was perhaps the first man of his generation then in the Church of Scotland; so that the invitation itself was a compliment to the neglected probationer. But the request conveyed also an intimation that Dr Chalmers was to be present, and that he was then in search of an assistant in the splendid labours he was beginning in Glasgow. This invitation naturally changed the current of Irving's thoughts. It turned him back from his plans of apostolical wandering, as well as from the anxious efforts of his friends to procure pupils who might advance his interests, and placed before him the most desirable opening to his real profession which he could possibly light upon. That path which should lead him to his chosen work, at home, in the country of his kindred, his love, and his early affections, was dearer to him than even that austere martyr-path which it was in his heart to follow if need was. He went to St George's with a new impulse of expectation, and preached, there can be little doubt, that one of his sermons which he thought most satisfactory. He describes this event to Mr Martin as follows, with a frankness of youthful pleasure, and at the same time a little transparent assumption of indifference as to the result, in a letter dated the 2nd August, 1819:—

"I preached Sunday week in St George's before Andrew Thomson and Dr Chalmers, with general, indeed, so far as I have heard, universal approbation. Andrew said for certain 'It was the production of no ordinary mind;' and how Dr Chalmers expressed his approbation I do not know, for I never put myself about to learn these things, as you know. I am pleased with this, perhaps more so than I ought to be, if I were as spiritually-minded as I should be—but there is a reason for it. To you yet behind the curtain, *la voilà!* I believe it was a sort of pious and charitable plot to let Dr C. hear me, previous to his making inquiries about me as fit for his assistant. Whether he is making them now he *has* heard me, and where he is making them, I do not know. For though few people can fight the battle of preferment without preoccupying the ground, &c., I would wish to be one of that few. Full well I know it is impossible without His aid who has planned the field and who guides the weapons, more unerringly than Homer's Apollo, and inspirits the busy champions; and that I am not industrious in procuring. Oh, do you and all who wish me well, give me the only favour I ask,—the favour of your prayers."

The important moment, however, passed, and the young man returned unsatisfied to his lonely apartments. He waited there for some time in blank, discouraging silence; then con-

cluded that nothing was to come of it, and that this once again his longing hope to find somebody who understood him and saw what he aimed at, was to be disappointed. This last failure seems to have given the intolerable touch to all his previous discouragements. He got up disgusted from that dull probation which showed him only how effectually all the gates of actual life and labour were barred against him. Even at that disconsolate moment he could still find time to write to his pupil and future sister-in-law about an Italian dictionary which he had undertaken to procure for her. Then he packed up his books and boxes, and sent them off to his father's house in Annan; but, probably desirous of some interval to prepare himself for that farewell which he intended, went himself to Greenock, meaning to travel from thence by some of the coasting vessels which called at the little ports on the Ayrshire and Galloway coast. Sick at heart, and buried in his own thoughts, he took the wrong boat, and was obliged to come ashore again. At that moment another steamer was in all the bustle of departure. Struck with a sudden caprice, as people often are in such a restless condition of mind and feeling, Irving resolved, in his half-desperation and momentary recklessness, to take the first which left the quay, and leaping listlessly into this, found it Irish, and bound for Belfast. The voyage was accomplished in safety, but not without an adventure in the end. Some notable crime had been perpetrated in Ireland about that time, the doer of which was still at large, filling the minds of the people with dreams of capture, and suspicions of every stranger. Of all the strangers entering that port of Belfast, perhaps there was no one so remarkable as this tall Scotchman, with his knapsack and slender belongings, his extraordinarily powerful frame, and his total ignorance of the place, who was travelling without any feasible motive or object. The excited authorities found the circumstances so remarkable, that they laid suspicious hands upon the singular stranger, who was only freed from their surveillance by applying to the Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Mr Hanna, who liberated his captive brother and took him home with Irish frankness. That visit was a jubilee for the children of the house. Black melancholy and disgust had fled before the breezes at sea, and the amusing but embarrasing *contretemps* on land; and Irving's heart, always open to children, expanded at once for the amusement of the children of that house. One of those boys was the Rev. Dr Hanna of Edinburgh, the biographer and son-in-law of Chalmers, who, at the distance of so many years, remembers the stories of the

stranger thus suddenly brought to the fireside, and his genial, cordial presence which charmed the house.

After this the young man wandered over the north of Ireland, as he had often wandered over the congenial districts of his own country, for some weeks; pursuing the system he had learned to adopt at home,—walking as the crow flies, finding lodging and shelter in the wayside cottages, sharing the potato and the milk which formed the peasant's meal. A singular journey; performed in primitive hardship, fatigue, and brotherly kindness; out of the reach of civilized persons or conventional necessities; undertaken out of pure caprice, the evident sudden impulse of letting things go as they would; and persevered in with something of the same *abandon* and determined abstraction of himself from all the disgusts and disappointments of life. Neither letters nor tokens of his existence seem to have come out of this temporary flight and banishment. He had escaped for the moment from those momentous questions which shortly must be faced and resolved. Presently it would be necessary to go back, to make the last preparations, to take the decisive steps, and say the farewells. He fairly ran away from it for a moment's breathing-time, and took refuge in the rude unknown life of the Irish cabins;—a thing which most people have somehow done, or at least attempted to do, at the crisis of their lives.

When he re-emerged out of this refreshing blank, and came to the common world again, where letters and ordinary appeals of life were awaiting him, he found a bulky enclosure from his father, in the Coleraine post-office. Gavin Irving wrote, in explanation of his double letter (for postage was no trifle in those days), that he would have copied the enclosed if he could have read it; but not being able to make out a word, was compelled to send it on for his son's own inspection. This enclosure was from Dr Chalmers, inviting Irving to go to Glasgow; but the date was some weeks back, and the invitation was by no means distinct as to the object for which he was wanted. It was enough, however, to stir the reviving heart of the young giant, whom his fall, and contact with kindly mother earth, had refreshed and re-invigorated. He set out without loss of time for Glasgow, but only to find Dr Chalmers absent, and once more to be plunged into the lingering pangs of suspense.

While waiting the Doctor's return, Irving again reported himself and his new expectations to his friends in Kirkcaldy.

"Glasgow, 1st September, 1819.

"You see I am once more in Scotland; and how I came to have found my way to the same place I started from, you shall now learn. On

Friday last arrived at Coleraine a letter from Dr Chalmers, pressing me to meet him in Edinburgh on the 30th, or in Glasgow the 31st Aug. So here I arrived, after a very tempestuous passage in the *Rob Roy:* and upon calling on the Doctor, I find he is still in Anstruther, at which place he proposes remaining awhile longer than he anticipated, and requests to have a few days of me there. So, but for another circumstance, you might have seen me posting through Kirkcaldy to Anster, the famed in song. That circumstance is Mrs Chalmers's ill-health, of which he will be more particularly informed than he is at present by this post; and then Miss Pratt tells me there is no doubt he will return post-haste, as all good husbands ought. Here, then, I am, a very sorry sight, I can assure you. You may remember how disabled in my rigging I was in the Kingdom; * conceive me, then, to have wandered a whole fortnight among the ragged sons of St Patrick, to have scrambled about the Giant's Causeway, and crossed the Channel twice, and sailed in fish-boats and pleasure-boats, and driven gigs and jaunting-cars, and never once condescended to ask the aid of a tailor's needle. Think of this, and figure what I must be now. But I have just been ordering a refit from stem to stern, and shall by to-morrow be able to appear amongst the best of them; and you know the Glasgow bodies ken fu' weel it's merely impossible to carry about with ane a' the comforts of the Sa't Market at ane's tail, or a' the comforts of Bond Street either. I shall certainly now remain till I have seen and finally determined with Dr Chalmers; for my time is so short that if I get home without a finale of one kind or other, it will interfere with the department of my foreign affairs, which imperiously call for attention."

The letter, which begins thus, is filled up, to the length of five long pages, by an account of the organization of the Synod of Ulster, and of a case of discipline which had just occurred in it, on which, on behalf of a friend at Coleraine, the traveller was anxious to consult the experience of the minister of Kirkcaldy. In respect to his own prospects, Irving's suspense was now speedily terminated. Dr Chalmers returned, and at once proposed to him to become his assistant in St John's. The solace to the young man's discouraged mind must have been unspeakable. Here, at last, was one man who understood the unacceptable probationer, and perceived in him that faculty which he himself discerned dimly and still hoped in—troubled, but not convinced by the general disbelief. To have his gift recognized by another mind was new life to Irving; and such a mind! the generous intelligence of the first of Scotch preachers. But with Presbyterian scrupulosity, in the midst of his eagerness, Irving hung back still. He could not submit to be "intruded upon" the people by the mere will of the incumbent, and would not receive even that grateful distinction, if he continued as distasteful as he had hitherto found himself.

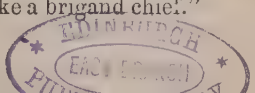
* The Kingdom of Fife, fondly so called by its affectionate population.

He was not confident of his prospects even when backed by the powerful encouragement of Dr Chalmers. "I will preach to them if you think fit," he is reported to have said; "but if they bear with my preaching, they will be the first people who have borne with it!" In this spirit, with the unconscious humility of a child, sorry not to satisfy his judges, but confessing the failure which he scarcely could understand, he preached his first sermon to the fastidious congregation in St John's. This was in October, 1819. "He was generally well liked, but some people thought him rather flowery. However, they were satisfied that he must be a good preacher, since Dr Chalmers had chosen him," says a contemporary witness. It was thus with little confidence on his own part, and somewhat careless indulgence on the part of the people, who were already in possesion of the highest preaching of the time, that Irving opened his mouth at last, and began his natural career.

CHAPTER VI.

GLASGOW.

It was in October, 1819, that Irving began his work in Glasgow—the first real work in his own profession which had opened to him. He was then in the full strength of early manhood, seven-and-twenty, the "Scottish uncelebrated Irving," whom his great countryman regretfully commemorates. His remarkable appearance seems, in the first place, to have impressed everybody. A lady, who was then a member of Dr Chalmers's church, and who had access to the immediate circle surrounding him, tells how she herself, on one occasion, being particularly engaged in some domestic duties, had given orders to her servants not to admit any visitors. She was interrupted in her occupation, however, notwithstanding this order, by the entrance of one of her maids, in a state of high excitement and curiosity. "Mem!" burst forth the girl, "there's a wonderful grand gentleman called: I couldna say you were engaged to *him*. I think he maun be a Highland Chief!"—"*That* Mr Irving!" exclaimed another individual of less elevated and poetical conceptions—"*That* Dr Chalmers's helper! I took him for a cavalry officer!" "Do you know, Doctor," said a third, addressing Chalmers himself, "what things people are saying about your new assistant? They say he's like a brigand chief."



"Well, well," said Dr Chalmers, with a smile, "whatever they say, they never think him like anything but a leader of men." Such was the impression he produced upon the little mercantile-ecclesiastical world of Glasgow. There, as everywhere, people were instinctively suspicious of this strange unconventional figure—did not know what to make of the natural grandeur about him—the lofty fashion of speech into which he had already fallen, and which seems to have been entirely appropriate to the garb and aspect in which nature had clothed him. But he found warm friends here, as everywhere, and by means of all his qualities, mental and bodily, his frankness and warmth, and habit of making himself the friend of the humblest individual he encountered, his splendid person and stately manners, took the hearts of the poor by storm. They are now dying out of those closes and wynds of Glasgow, who remember Irving as Dr Chalmers's helper; but there still lingers here and there a recollection of that kindliest genial visitor. Chalmers himself, though a man of the warmest humanity, had at all times a certain abstract intentness about him, which must have altered the character of individual kindness as coming from his hands. His parishioners were to him emphatically his parishioners, the "body" (not vile, perhaps; but still more profoundly important for the experiment's sake than for its own) upon which one of the most magnificent of experiments was to be tried. But to Irving they were the Johns and Sandies, the Campbells and Macalisters,—the human neighbours who were of his personal acquaintance and individually interesting to himself. Such a distinction makes itself known involuntarily. The position he held was one completely secondary and auxiliary, not even answering to that of a curate; for he was still only a probationer, unordained, without any rights in the Church except the license to preach, which was his sole qualification. He was not responsible for any part of the working of that huge machinery which Dr Chalmers bore up on his Herculean shoulders, and which naturally collapsed when his mighty vital force was withdrawn. The "helper" went about more lightly, unburdened by social economy, and gained for himself, among the poor people whom it was his daily work to visit, the place of an undoubted and much-prized friend.

Glasgow was at this period in a very disturbed and troublous condition. Want of work and want of food had wrought their natural social effect upon the industrious classes; and the eyes of the hungry weavers and cotton-spinners were turned with spasmodic anxiety to those wild political quack remedies,

the inefficacy of which no amount of experience will ever make clear to people in similar circumstances. The entire country was in a dangerous mood; palpitating throughout with deep-seated complaint and grievance, to which the starving revolutionaries in such towns as Glasgow acted only as a kind of safety-valve, preventing a worse explosion. The discontent was drawing towards its climax when Irving received his appointment as assistant to the minister of St John's. In such a large poor parish he encountered on all sides the mutterings of the popular storm. Chalmers, always liberal and statesmanlike, saw the real grievance, which finally laboured and struggled, through the contest of years, into that full redress and establishment of popular rights which seems to make any such crisis impossible now. But Irving's mind was of a different construction. He was one of those men of inconsistent politics, governed at once by prejudices and sympathies, whose "attitude" it is impossible to foretell; and of whom one can only predict that their political opinions will take the colour given by their heart; and that the side most strongly and feelingly set forth before them will undoubtedly carry the day. His nature was profoundly conservative; and yet the boldest innovation might have secured his devoted support, had it approved itself to his individual thoughts. His political opinions, indeed, seem to have been such as are common to literary men, artists, and women, entirely unconnected with politics, and who only now and then find themselves sufficiently interested to inform themselves upon public matters. Accordingly, he appears in after-life in strong opposition to every measure known as *liberal;* while in Glasgow, with those poor revolutionary weavers round him on every side, his heart convincing him of their miseries and despair, and his profound trust, not in human nature, but in the human creatures known to himself, persuading him that no harm could come from their hands, he stands perfectly calm and friendly amid the panic, disdaining to fear. That the crisis was an alarming one everybody allows. Nothing less than the horrors of the French Revolution—battle and murder and sudden death—floated before the terror-stricken eyes of all who had anything to lose. Whig Jeffrey, a non-alarmist and (in moderation) friend of the people, declares, solemnly, that "if the complaints of the people are repressed with insults and menaces—if no step is taken to relieve their distresses and redress their real and undeniable grievances—if the whole mass of their complaints, reasonable and unreasonable, are to be treated as seditious and audacious, and to meet with no

other answer than preparations to put them down by force, then indeed we may soon have a civil war among us—and a civil war of a character far more deplorable and atrocious than was ever known in this land—a war of the rich against the poor; of the Government against the body of the people; of the soldiery against the great bulk of the labouring classes; a war which can *never* be followed by any cordial or secure peace; and which must end, or rather begin, with the final and complete subversion of those liberties and that constitution which has hitherto been our pride, our treasure, and our support and consolation under all other calamities."

It was a conjunction of many troubles: foremost among which was that sharp touch of starvation which makes men desperate; that Want—most pertinacious and maddest of all revolutionaries, who never fails to revenge bitterly the carelessness which lets him enter our well-defended doors,—he was there, wolfish and seditious, in Glasgow in the winter of 1819, plotting pikes and risings, with wild dreams of that legislation, never yet found out, which is to make a paradise of earth; dreams and plots which were to blurt out, so far as Scotland was concerned, in the dismal little tragi-comedy of Bonnymuir some months later, and there be made a melancholy end of. But while everybody else was prophesying horrors, it is thus that Irving, with tender domestic prefaces of kindness and congratulation, writes to his brother-in-law, Mr. Fergusson, a few months after his arrival in Glasgow.

"You will look for Glasgow intelligence, and truly I can neither get nor give any. If I should report from my daily ministrations among the poorest class and the worst reported-of class of our population, I should deliver an opinion so unfavourable as it would be hardly safe for myself to deliver, lest I should be held a *radical* likewise. Now the truth is, I have visited in about three hundred families, and have met with the kindest welcome and entertainment and invitations. Nay, more, I have entered on the tender subject of their present sufferings, in which they are held so ferocious, and have found them in general both able and willing to entertain the religious lesson and improvement arising out of it. This may arise from the way of setting it forth, which I endeavour to make with the utmost tenderness and feeling, as well is due when you see people in the midst of nakedness and starvation. Yet we are armed against them to the teeth; and the alarm took so generally that, for all my convictions and knowledge, I had engaged a horse-pistol to stand out in defence of my own castle like a true Englishman! But the storm seems over-driven, although this morning, even, there was a summons to the sharp-shooters by break of day, and all the soldiers to arms in the barracks. Nobody knows a whit, and everybody fears a deal. The common ignorance is only surpassed by the common alarm, and that you know is the most agitating of all

alarms. But from Monday to Saturday I am going amongst them without the slightest apprehension; but perhaps I may be convinced by point of pike some day, which I pray may be averted for his sake that should hold it. This is not braggadocio, but Christian (feeling); for the blood of the innocent always stains most deeply the hand that sheds it . . . . I hope my father and you won't forget your Glasgow jaunt. I will introduce you to some of our Calton weavers, now so dreaded, whom Jeffrey the reviewer calls the finest specimens of the human intellect he has met with . . . I commend to your affection my dear mother, from whom I have had a most affectionate letter; and George, who will prove a credit, I trust, to such two gifted masters as yourself and your humble servant . . . . To all others, my good and kind friends, commend your affectionate brother,

"Edward Irving."

It was thus that Irving judged of the dangerous masses, who seemed to other eyes so ripe for mischief; and it is characteristic to observe the difference between the manner in which this opinion is expressed, and Dr Chalmers's deliverance on the same subject, contained in his letters to Wilberforce. There the clear-sighted Scotch legislator, whom his profession bounded to a parish, makes a stride of twenty years to the conclusions of another generation, and lays his hand broadly upon that principle which has now been received among the standard principles of English government. "From my extensive minglings with the people," says Dr Chalmers, "I am quite confident in affirming the power of another expedient (that is, besides the repeal of certain specified taxes) to be such, that it would operate with all the quickness and effect of a charm in lulling their agitated spirits: I mean the repeal of the Corn Bill. I have ever been in the habit of disliking the interference of the legislature in matters of trade, saving for the purpose of a revenue." Irving has no theories of cure on hand. His thoughts do not embrace the polity of nations. He has not contemplated that troubled sea to divine what secret current it is which heaves its billows into storm. He goes down among the crowds which are made of flesh and blood; he stands among them and calls out with courageous tender voice that they are all men like others; men trustful and cordial; kind to himself, open to kindness; whom it behoves their neighbours to treat, not with the cruelty of fear, but, "with tenderness and feeling, *as well is due*," he adds with manly and touching simplicity, "*when you see people in the midst of nakedness and starvation.*" A greater contrast in agreement could scarcely be.

This Glasgow parish had come to singular fortune at that moment. After much labour and many exertions, Chalmers,

already the greatest preacher and most eminent man in the entire Scotch establishment, had got himself translated from the Tron Church, which was his first charge in Glasgow—solely in order to carry out those social plans which are the greatest distinctive feature of his life—to St John's. His theory is well known; but as theories which are well known are apt enough to glide into vagueness from that very reason, it may not be amiss to repeat, in the simplest manner, what it was. The truth was simply that he had been born, like other men of his generation, into a primitive Scotland, comparatively little affected by English usages and manners—a self-supporting, independent nation, ignorant of poor-laws and workhouses, and full of strenuous hatred to all such hateful charities. During all the centuries of Presbyterianism, "the plate," or weekly offering made at the door of the church on entering, had furnished the parochial revenue of charity; and upon this national and universal provision for the poor the statesman eye of Chalmers fixed with characteristic intentness. Like other men of the greatest type, he was unable to believe that what he might do was yet impossible to others. Resolute to show all Scotland and the world that the Church's ancient primitive provision could yet meet all increased modern emergencies, and able from his high position and influence to bring, half by coercion of moral force, half by persuasion, the Glasgow magistrates to accept his terms, he made it a condition of his remaining among them that this parish of St John's, one of the largest, poorest, and most degraded in the town, should be handed over to him in undisturbed possession, swept clean of all poor-rates, workhouses, and public parish aid. He did not demand the criminal supervision and power of the sword certainly; though at this distance of time, and to English readers, the one might seem almost as reasonable as the other; but he secured his terms with the puzzled civic functionaries, who half believed in him. In this parish Chalmers set up the most surprising, splendid autocracy that has ever been attempted—an autocracy solely directed to the benefit of that little world of people in the most unlovely portion of Glasgow. He was no sooner established in his new dominion than he issued imperial orders for a census, and made one in true royal fashion. There were 10,304 souls. The condition in life of most among them was that of weavers, labourers, and factory-workers. About one family in thirty-three kept a servant, and in some parts of the district this point of domestic luxury was even more rare. Bad times, failure of work, and all the casualties of accident and disease would, according to ordinary calculations, leave a

large margin of inevitable pauperism in such a district. But the minister-autocrat had sworn that pauperism was to be no longer, and he made good his word. For three brilliant years "the plate" not only supplied all the wants of the poor in the parish, but did large service besides in the erection of schools; and for thirteen years, as long as the machinery originated by the wonderful imperious vitality of this great man could go on without a new impulse, its success continued as perfect as it was extraordinary. This seems to me the highest and most wonderful victory of Chalmers's life. It is unique in modern annals—a bold return, out of the heart of all those evils of extreme civilization which crush the poor, into that primitive life when neighbour helped neighbour and friend stood by friend. What an ideal despot, grand patriot autocrat, or irresponsible vizier, that Scotch minister would have made!

In this system of things, Irving took his place in perfect accord, but not resemblance. Statesmanship was not in him; but admiration and loyal service were of his very essence. Without any ulterior views, he visited those "three hundred families,"—won their confidence and friendship, in most cases readily enough; and when that was not the case, took them captive by innocent wiles and premeditation. One such case, which must have been a remarkable one, is told in so many different versions, that it is difficult to decide which is the true one. A certain shoemaker, radical and infidel, was among the number of those under Irving's special care; a home-workman of course, always present, silent, with his back turned upon the visitors, and refusing any communication except a sullen *humph* of implied criticism, while his trembling wife made her deprecating curtsy in the foreground. The way in which this intractable individual was finally won over, is attributed by some tellers of the story to a sudden happy inspiration on Irving's part; but, by others, to plot and intention. Approaching the bench one day, the visitor took up a piece of patent leather, then a recent invention, and remarked upon it in somewhat skilled terms. The shoemaker went on with redoubled industry at his work; but at last, roused and exasperated by the speech and pretence of knowledge, demanded, in great contempt, but without raising his eyes, "What do *ye* ken about leather?" This was just the opportunity his assailant wanted; for Irving, though a minister and a scholar, was a tanner's son, and could discourse learnedly upon that material. Gradually interested and mollified, the cobbler slackened work, and listened while his visitor described some process of making shoes by machinery, which he had carefully got up for the purpose. At last the

shoemaker so far forgot his caution as to suspend his work altogether, and lift his eyes to the great figure stooping over his bench. The conversation went on with increased vigour after this, till finally the recusant threw down his arms. "Od, you're a decent kind o' fellow!—do *you* preach?" said the vanquished, curious to know more of his victor. The advantage was discreetly, but not too hotly pursued; and on the following Sunday the rebel made a defiant, shy appearance at church. Next day Irving encountered him in the savoury Gallowgate, and hailed him as a friend. Walking beside him in natural talk, the tall probationer laid his hand upon the shirt-sleeve of the shrunken sedentary workman, and marched by his side along the well-frequented street. By the time they had reached the end of their mutual way not a spark of resistance was left in the shoemaker. His children henceforward went to school; his deprecating wife went to the kirk in peace. He himself acquired that suit of Sunday "blacks" so dear to the heart of the poor Scotchman, and became a church-goer and respectable member of society; while his acknowledgment of his conqueror was conveyed with characteristic reticence, and concealment of all deeper feeling, in the self-excusing pretence—"He's a sensible man, *yon;* he kens about leather?"

The preacher who knew about leather had, however, in conjunction with that cordiality which won the shoemaker's heart, a solemnity and apostolic demeanour which might have looked like affectation in another man, and has, indeed, been called affectation even in Irving by those who did not know him; though never by any man who did. Probably his long, silent contemplation of that solitary mission which he had set his heart on, had made him frame his very manner and address according to apostolic rule. When he entered those sombre apartments in the Gallowgate, it was with the salutation, "Peace be to this house," with which he might have entered a Persian palace or desert tent. "It was very peculiar, a thing that nobody else did," says a simple-minded member of Dr Chalmers's agency; "it was impossible not to remark it, out of the way as it was; but there was not one of the agency could make an objection to it. It took the people's attention wonderfully." A certain solemn atmosphere entered with that lofty figure, speaking, in matchless harmony of voice, its "Peace be to this house." To be prayed for, sometimes edifyingly, sometimes tediously, was not uncommon to the Glasgow poor; but to be blessed was a novelty to them. Perhaps if the idea had been pursued into the depths of their minds, these Presbyterians, all retaining something of ecclesiastical knowledge, however little

religion they might have, would have been disposed to deny the right of any man to assume that priestly power of blessing. Irving, however, did not enter into any discussion of the subject. It was his habitual practice; and the agency, puzzled and a little awed, "could not make an objection to it." He did still more than this. He laid his hands upon the heads of the children, and pronounced, with imposing solemnity, the ancient benediction, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee," over each of them—a practice startling to Scotch ears, but acquiesced in involuntarily as natural to the man who, all solitary and individual in picturesque homely grandeur, went to and fro among them. So grave a preface did not detract from the entire heartiness with which he entered into the concerns of the household; an intercourse which he himself describes with touching simplicity in his farewell sermon addressed to the people of St John's. It is impossible to give any account of this part of his work half so true or so affecting as is conveyed thus, in his own words:—

"Oh, how my heart rejoices to recur to the hours I have sitten under the roofs of the people, and been made a partaker of their confidence, and a witness of the hardships they had to endure. In the scantiest and perhaps worst times with which this manufacturing city hath ever been pressed, it was my almost daily habit to make a round of their families, and uphold, what in me lay, the declining cause of God. There have I sitten with little silver or gold of my own to bestow, with little command over the charity of others, and heard the various narratives of hardship—narratives uttered for the most part with modesty and patience; oftener drawn forth with difficulty than obtruded on your ear;—their wants, their misfortunes, their ill-requited labour, their hopes vanishing, their families dispersing in search of better habitations, the Scottish economy of their homes giving way before encroaching necessity; debt rather than saving their condition; bread and water their scanty fare; hard and ungrateful labour the portion of their house. All this have I often seen and listened to within naked walls; the witness, oft the partaker, of their miserable cheer; with little or no means to relieve. Yet be it known, to the glory of God and the credit of the poor, and the encouragement of tender-hearted Christians, that such application to the heart's ailments is there in our religion, and such a hold in its promises, and such a pith of endurance in its noble examples, that when set forth by one inexperienced tongue, with soft words and kindly tones, they did never fail to drain the heart of the sourness that calamity engenders, and sweeten it with the balm of resignation—often enlarge it with cheerful hope, sometimes swell it high with the rejoicings of a Christian triumph."

A more affecting picture of the position of the Christian visitor, "with little or no means to relieve," except by sym-

pathy, and testimony to the consolatory uses of the gospel, was never made. There does not exist human misery under the sun which would not be cheered and softened by such ministrations. He who was "often the partaker of their miserable cheer," who blessed the poor meal and blessed the house, and linked himself to the sufferers by such half-sacramental breaking of the bread of sorrow, could never fail to find his way into their hearts. He was not always, however, without silver or gold of his own to bestow. A little legacy was left him just at the time he describes, a legacy of some sum between thirty and a hundred pounds,—for tradition has come to be doubtful as to the amount. Such a little windfall one might suppose would have been very acceptable to Dr Chalmers's helper; and so it was; but after a fashion entirely his own. Irving melted his legacy into the one-pound notes current in Scotland, deposited them in his desk, and every morning, as long as they lasted, put one into his pocket when he went out to his visitations. The legacy lasted just as many days as it was pounds in value, and doubtless produced as much pleasure to its owner as ever was purchased by money. What Dr Chalmers said to this barefaced alms-giving, in the very midst of his social economy, I cannot tell. As to its destination nobody but Irving was any the wiser. It melted into gleams of comfort, transitory but precious; and he who shared the hard and scanty bread on the poor man's table, could share the better meal when it was in his power to bestow it. This was Irving's idea of his office and functions among the poor. He had learned it theoretically from no other teacher than his own heart. But he had learned the practice of it, which so many fain would acquire without knowing how, in those primitive journeys of his, where his lodgings were found in the cot-house and cabin; and it was his pleasure to make himself as acceptable a guest as if the potato or porridge had been festive dainties, and his entertainers lords and princes. Such a gift of brotherhood, however, is as rare as any gift of genius. Irving was unique in it among his contemporaries; and has had but few equals in any time.

Matters, however, had not changed much up to this period in respect to his preaching. Friends who accompanied him to church when it was his turn to conduct the services, tell, as a very common incident, that the preacher going in was met by groups coming out with disappointed looks, complaining, as the reason of their departure, that "it's no *himsel'* the day." Nothing better was to be looked for when *himsel'* was such a man as Chalmers; and if his assistant felt at all sore on the

subject, his mortification must have been much allayed by the unrivalled gifts of his great colleague. There is, however, no sign of soreness or mortification in him. A brilliant vision of what he yet might attain had flickered before his eyes all through his probation, as is apparent by many tokens, but he never disguised from himself his failure in popularity. He smiled to his companions, not without an appreciation of the joke, when the good people came out of the church door because it was "no himsel'." He did not forget what he had said, that if this people bore with him, they were the first who ever would; nor did he hesitate to repeat that "this congregation is almost the first in which our preaching was tolerated," and even that still, "we know, on the other hand, that our imperfections have not been hid from your eyes." Yet this unpopularity, admitted with frankness so unusual, and perhaps excessive, was by no means universal. Within the great assembly who venerated Dr Chalmers was a smaller circle who looked upon Irving with all the enthusiastic admiration naturally given to a man whose merits the admirer himself has been the first to find out. "Irving's preaching," said Dr Chalmers, evidently not with any very great admiration of it, "is like Italian music, appreciated only by connoisseurs." But he does not hesitate to compare the influence of his assistant, on another and more cordial occasion, to a special magnetic spell, which went to the very hearts of those susceptible to it, though it fell blank upon the unimpressionable multitude. On the whole, Dr Chalmers's opinion of him is the opinion of one who only half understands, and does not more than half sympathize with, a character much less broad, but in some respects more elevated than his own. A certain impatience flashes into the judgment. The statesman and philosopher watches the poet-enthusiast with a doubtful, troubled, half-amused, half-sad perplexity;—likes him, yet does not know what he would be at;—is embarrassed by his warm love, praise, and gratitude;—vexed to see him commit himself;—impatient of what he himself thinks credulity, vanity, waste of power; but never without a sober, regretful affection for the bright, unsteady light that could not be persuaded to shine only in its proper lantern. This sort of admiring, indulgent, affectionate half-comprehension is apparent throughout the whole intercourse of these two great men. That Chalmers was the greater intellect of the two, I do not attempt to question; nor yet that he was in all practical matters the more eminent and serviceable man; but that Irving had instinctive comprehensions and graces which went high over the head

of his great contemporary, seems to me as evident as the other conclusion.

A light quite peculiar and characteristic falls upon Glasgow by means of these two figures,—Chalmers. with a certain sweep and wind of action always about him, rushing on impetuous, at the height of his influence, legislating for his parish in bold independence, perhaps the only real Autocrat of his day ;—Irving, almost loitering about the unlovely streets, open to all the individual interests thereabouts ; learned in the names, the stories, the peculiarities of his three hundred families ; still secondary, dependent, dallying with dreams of a time when he should be neither, of a Utopia all his own ; not influential at all as yet, only remarkable ; noted on the streets, noted in the houses he frequented, an out-of-the-way, incomprehensible man, whose future fortune it was not safe to foretell.

The year after his arrival in Glasgow he made another visit to Ireland, which was attended by one amusing result, upon which his friends often rallied him. He had made an appointment with a young Glasgow friend to meet him at Annan, in his father's house, with the idea of guiding the stranger through those moors and mosses of Dumfriesshire which were so dear and well known to himself. But while his friend kept the appointment carefully, Irving, seduced by the pleasures of his ramble, or induced, as appears from a letter, to lengthen it out by a little incursion into England from Liverpool, forgot all about it. The accommodations of Gavin Irving's house at Annan were limited; and though there was no limit to Mrs Irving's motherly hospitality, it was not easy to entertain the unknown guest. The youngest of the handsome sisters had to exert herself in this emergency. She showed the young stranger the way to the waterside, and all the modest beauties of the little town. The young man did not miss his friend, nor was any way impatient for Edward's arrival; and when the truant did come, at the end of a fortnight, he was called upon to greet the stranger, whom he had himself sent to Annan, as his sister's affianced husband—an astonishing but very happy conclusion, as it turned out, to his own carelessness.

At another holiday-time Irving accompanied a member of his congregation in some half-pleasure, half-business excursion in a gig. During this journey the pair were about to drive down a steep descent, when Irving, whose skill as a driver was not great, managed to secure the reins, and accomplished the descent at so amazing a pace that several of a little party of soldiers, who were crossing a bridge at the foot of the hill, were driven into the stream by the vehemence of the unex-

pected charge. Some little distance further on, the gig and the travellers paused at a roadside inn, into the public room of which entered, after a while, several of these soldiers. Two of them regarded with whispered conferences the driver of the gig; and when an opportunity of conversation offered, one of the two addressed Irving. "This man," said the skilful Scotch conversationalist, "thinks he's the wisest man in a' the regiment. What do ye think, sir? He says you're the great Dr Chalmers." "And do you really think," asked Irving, with an appeal to the candour of this inquiring mind, "that I look like a minister?" "My certy, no!" cried the simple-minded warrior; "or you wouldna drive like *yon!*"

Such comic lights, often dwelt upon and much appreciated by his friends, played about this unusual figure, necessary accompaniments of its singular aspect. To his intimates he opened his heart so freely, and exhibited all his peculiarities after so transparent a fashion, that those points of his character which might have appeared defects to the eyes of strangers, grew dear to those who loved him, originating as they did in his own perfect affectionateness and sincerity. "He was vain, there is no denying it," writes a dear friend of his; "but it was a vanity proceeding out of what was best and most lovable in him,—his childlike simplicity and desire to be loved; his crystal transparency of character letting every little weakness show through it as frankly as his noblest qualities; and, above all, out of his loyal, his divine trust in the absolute truth and sincerity, and the generous sympathy and good-will, of all who made friendly advances towards him." But his aspect to the general mass, who saw him only "in society," or in the pulpit, was of a different kind. The solemnity of his appearance and manners impressed that outside audience. He spoke in language "such as grave livers do in Scotland use," with a natural pomp of diction at all times; and took a certain priestly attitude which is not usual in Scotland,—the attitude of a man who stands between God and his fellows. A story, for which I will not vouch, is told of one such remarkable appearance which he made at a Glasgow dinner-party. A young man was present who had permitted himself to talk profanely, in a manner now unknown, and which would not be tolerated in any party now-a-days. After expending all his little wit upon priestcraft and its inventions, this youth, getting bold by degrees, at last attacked Irving—who had hitherto taken no notice of him—directly, as one of the world-deluding order. Irving heard him out in silence, and then turned to the other listeners. "My friends," he said, "I will make no reply

to this unhappy youth, who hath attacked the Lord in the person of his servant; but let us pray that this his sin may not be laid to his charge;" and with a solemn motion of his hand, which the awe-struck diners-out instinctively obeyed, Irving rose up to his full majestic height, and solemnly commended the offender to the forgiveness of God. Whether this incident really occurred I cannot tell; but it is one of the anecdotes told of him, and it certainly embodies the most popular conception of his demeanour and bearing.

The labours of all engaged in that parish were unceasing; and in addition to the two services on each Sunday, which were Irving's share of the work, and the perpetual round of parochial visits and occasional services, he was "always ready,"—as says Mr David Stowe, the educational reformer of Glasgow, whose life-long work was then commencing in a great system of Sunday schools,—to lend his aid wherever it was required. When the Sunday scholars were slow to be drawn out, or the district unpromising, or a more distinct impulse necessary than could be given by mere visits and invitations, Irving did not hesitate to go down with the anxious teacher to his "proportion," and with his Bible in his hand, take his station against the wall and address the slowly gathering assembly all unused to out-of-door addresses, a species of ministrations which were at the period considered rather beneath the dignity of ministers of the Church. Irving had also the charge of visiting the convicts in prison; and is said to have done so on some occasions with great effect. One of those unhappy persons had been condemned for a murder, though strenuously denying his guilt. After his conviction the unhappy man succeeded in interesting his visitor by his assertions of innocence; and when Irving left the prison, it was to plunge into the dens of the Gallowgate, taking with him as assistants a private friend of his own, and a member of Dr Chalmers's agency—to make a last anxious effort to discover whether any exculpatory evidence was to be found. The surviving member of that generous party remembers how they searched through the foul recesses of the Glasgow St Giles's; and went to all the haunts of their wretched client, a charitable, forlorn hope. But the matter, it turned out, was hopeless; what they heard confirmed instead of shaking, the justice of the conviction, and the bootless investigation was given up.

Thus Irving lived, in the shade. Some of those friends to whom he attached himself so fervently, young men like himself, not yet settled down into the proprieties of life,

supported his claims to a higher appreciation with vehement partisanship, which proceeded as much from love to the man as from admiration of his genius. Here and there an eager boy, in the ragged red gown which Glasgow uses for academical costume, recognized, with the intuition of youth, the high eloquence flashing over those slumbrous heads. But on the whole, the Glasgow congregation sat patronizingly quiet, and listened, without much remarking what the "helper had to say." As much as the ordinary brain could bear, they had already heard, or were to hear the same day, from "the Doctor himself." Under such circumstances it was scarcely to be expected that they could do more than listen calmly to the addresses of the other preacher, whose manner, and looks, and mode of address were all undoubtedly exceptional, and subject to criticism. Such a strain would have been impossible to any merely mortal audience; so the good people drowsed through the afternoons, and were kind to Mr Irving; they were very glad to hear the Doctor found him so serviceable among his poor; that the agency made so good a report of him; and that altogether he was likely to do well. They told the current stories of his gigantic form, and doubtful looks, and odd ways—laughed at his impetuous individuality with kindness, but amusement—and had as little idea of the fame he was to reach, as of any other incomprehensible event. The profound unconsciousness in which this strange little community, all dominated and governed by their leader and his great project, held lightly the other great intelligence in the midst of them, is as strange a picture of human nature as could be seen. It reminds one of that subtle law of evidence which Sir Walter Scott introduces so dramatically in accounting for the recognition of his hero Bertram, in *Guy Mannering*, by the postilion, who had seen him without an idea of recognizing him before. "Wha was thinking o' auld Ellangowan then?" says Jock Jabos. The principle holds good in wider questions. The Glasgow people had their eyes fixed upon one man of genius and his great doings. They certainly saw the other man in the shadow of his chief, and had a perception, by the way, of his stature and peculiarities. But who was thinking of genius or extraordinary endowments in Dr Chalmers's helper? Their eyes had not been directed to him; they saw him always in the shade, carrying out another man's ideas, and dominated by another man's superior influence; and this most natural and prevailing principle of human thought kept Irving obscure and unrevealed to their eyes.

The same influence gradually wrought upon himself. It is apparent that there was much in his Glasgow life which he enjoyed, and which suited him; and no more loyal expression of regard for a master and leader was ever written than the dedication afterwards addressed to Dr Chalmers, in which he thanks God for "that dispensation which brought me acquainted with your good and tender-hearted nature, whose splendid accomplishments I knew already; and you now live in the memory of my heart more than in my admiration. While I laboured as your assistant, my labours were never weary; they were never enough to express my thankfulness to God for having associated me with such a man, and my affection to the man with whom I was associated." To the same tenor is the tone of his farewell sermon, the first production which he ever gave to the press, and in which, not without much strenuous argument for the freedom of individual preaching, his favourite and oft-repeated theme, he acknowledges "the burden of my obligations to my God," in respect to his residence in Glasgow. "He has given me," says the preacher, his heart swelling with all the gratitude and affection which kindness always produced in him, and the warm impulse of his nature casting all drawbacks behind, "the fellowship of a man mighty in his Church, an approving congregation of his people, the attachment of a populous corner of his vineyard. I ask no more of Heaven for the future but to grant me the continuance of the portion which, by the space of three years, I have here enjoyed. But this I need not expect. Never again shall I find another man of transcendent genius whom I can love as much as I admire—into whose house I can go in and out like a son—whom I can revere as a father, and serve with the devotion of a child—never shall I find another hundred consociated men of piety, and by free-will consociated, whose every sentiment I can adopt, and whose every scheme I can find delight to second. And I feel I shall never find another parish of ten thousand into every house of which I was welcomed as a friend, and solicited back as a brother."

This was one side of the picture: sincerely felt and fully expressed, without any restraint from the thought that on the other side he had expressed, and yet should express as fully, his weariness, his longings for a scene of action entirely his own; his almost disgust with a subordination which had now exceeded the natural period of probation. It was no part of Irving's temper to acknowledge any such restraint. What he said in the fullest, grateful sincerity, he did not

stumble and choke over because he was aware of having on another occasion expressed, with equal warmth, another phase of feeling, equally sincere, though apparently inconsistent. That he should have been content with the position which he describes in such glowing colours would have been simply unnatural. He had now attained the age when it becomes necessary for a man to do what he has to do in this world for himself, and not for another: he was approaching the completion of his thirtieth year. Nature herself protested that he could remain no longer dependent and secondary; and that it was time to be done with probationary efforts. His thoughts, which had been so long kept silent while his heart burned, and so long indifferently listened to by a preoccupied audience, must have full course. His energy must have scope in an independent field. To stand aside longer, with all his conscious powers burning within him, was gradually becoming impossible to Irving. At the very moment when he recognized with generous enthusiasm the advantages of his position, he felt its limits and confinements like a chain of iron round his neck. The bondage, though these were the most desirable of bonds, was gradually growing intolerable. He was a man fully equipped and prepared, aware of a longer probation, a sterner prelude, a harder training than most men. We will not venture to say that the natural sweetness of his heart could have been embittered even by the continuance of this unencouraging labour; but, at all events, nature took alarm, and felt herself in danger. He received an invitation to go to Kingston, in Jamaica, to a Presbyterian congregation there, and is said to have taken it into serious consideration, and only to have been deterred from accepting it by the opposition of his friends. White men or black men, what did it matter, so long as he could build, not upon another man's foundation, but do his own work as God has ordained to every man? And failing that, his ancient missionary thoughts returned to his mind. I cannot help thinking that there is something wonderfully pathetic and touching in this project, which he carried so far upon the way of life with him, and to which up to this moment he always recurred when his path became dark or impracticable. I could fancy it a suggestion of Heaven to turn aside his feet, while it was yet possible, from that fiery ordeal and passage of agony through which his course lay. The same thoughts, which once filled his chamber in Bristo Street, came back in the winter of 1821, when, after two years' labour in Glasgow, he saw himself no further advanced

in his independent way than when, full of hopes, he had come there to open his mouth in his Master's service. Dr Chalmers could get many assistants, but Edward Irving could get but one life, and was this all it was destined to come to? Again he saw himself going forth forlorn, giving up all things for his Lord; carrying the gospel afar, over distant mountains, distant plains, into the far Eastern wastes. It was an enterprise to make the heart beat and swell, but it was death to all human hopes. When he grasped that cross the roses and laurels would fade out of his expectation for ever. Love and fame must both be left behind. It was in him to leave them behind, had the visible moment arrived, and the guidance of Providence appeared. But he understood while he pondered what was the extent of the sacrifice.

Just at this moment the clouds opened—he has described it so well in his own words that it would be worse than vanity to use any other:—

"The Caledonian Church had been placed under the pastoral care of two worthy ministers, who were successively called to parochial charges in the Church of Scotland; and by their removal, and for want of a stated ministry, it was reduced to great and almost hopeless straits. But faith hopeth against hope, and when it does so, never faileth to be rewarded. This was proved in the case of those two men whose names I have singled out from your number, to give them that honour to which they are entitled in the face of the congregation. Having heard through a friend of theirs, and now also of mine, but at that time unknown to me, of my unworthy labours in Glasgow, as assistant to the Rev. Dr Chalmers, they commissioned him to speak to me concerning their vacant church, and not to hide from me its present distress.

"Well do I remember the morning when, as I sat in my lonely apartment, meditating the uncertainties of a preacher's calling, and revolving in my mind purposes of missionary work, this stranger stepped in upon my musing, and opened to me the commission with which he had been charged. The answer which I made to him, with which also I opened my correspondence with the brethren, whose names are mentioned above, was to this effect: 'If the times permitted, and your necessities required that I should not only preach the gospel without being burdensome to you, but also by the labour of my hands minister to your wants, this would I esteem a more honourable degree than to be Archbishop of Canterbury.' And such as the beginning was, was also the continuance and ending of this negotiation. . . . Being in such a spirit towards one another, the preliminaries were soon arranged—indeed I may say needed no arrangement—and I came up on the day before the Christmas of 1821, to make trial and proof of my gifts before the remnant of the congregation which still held together." *

* Dedication of the *Last Days* to W. Dinwiddie, Esq., Father of the Session of the National Scotch Church; W. Hamilton, Esq., Secretary of the

His own appreciation of his welcome in London, and the hopes excited in his mind by this new development of affairs, may be learnt from the following letter, addressed to his much-regarded pupil and friend Miss Welsh.

"Glasgow, 34, Kent Street, 9th February, 1822.

"My dear and lovely Pupil, When I am my own master, delivered from the necessity of attending to engagements, ever soliciting me upon the spot where I am, and exhausting me to very lassitude before the evening, when my friendly correspondence should commence, then, and not till then, shall I be able, I fear, to discharge my heart of the obligations which it feels to those at a distance. Do excuse me, I pray you, by the memory of our old acquaintance, and anything else which it is pleasant to remember, for my neglect to you in London, and not to you alone, I am sorry to say, but to every one whom I was not officially bound to write to, even my worthy father. Forget and forgive it; and let us be established in our former correspondence as if no such sin against it had ever taken place. I could say some things on my own behalf; but till you go to London, which I hope will not be till I am there to be a brother to you, you could not at all sympathize with them.

"And know now, though late, that my head is almost turned with the approbation I received—certainly my head is turned; for from being a poor desolate creature, melancholy of success, yet steel against misfortune, I have become all at once full of hope and activity. My hours of study have doubled themselves—my intellect, long unused to expand itself, is now awakening again, and truth is revealing itself to my mind. And perhaps the dreams and longings of my fair correspondent * may yet be realized. I have been solicited to publish a discourse which I delivered before his Royal Highness the Duke of York; but have refused till my apprehensions of truth be larger, and my treatment of it more according to the models of modern and ancient times. The thanks of all the directors I have received formally—the gift of all the congregation of the Bible used by his Royal Highness. The elders paid my expenses in a most princely style. My countrymen of the first celebrity, especially in art, welcomed me to their society, and the first artist in the city drew a most admirable half-length miniature of me in action. And so, you see, I have reason to be vain.

"But these things, my dear Jane, delight me not, save as vouchsafements of my Maker's bounty, the greater because the more undeserved. Were I established in the love and obedience of Him, I should rise toweringly aloft into the regions of a very noble and sublime character, and so would my highly-gifted pupil, to retain whose friendship shall be a consolation to my life: to have her fellowship in divine ambitions would make her my dear companion through eternity.

"To your affectionate mother, whose indulgence gives me this pleasant communication with her daughter, I have to express my attachment in every letter. May you live worthy of each other, mutual

Committee for building the National Scotch Church; and to the other members of the Session and Committee.

* He refers to his young friend's affectionate prophecies of his future fame.

stays through life, doubly endeared, because alone together; and therefore doubly dutiful to Him who is the Husband of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless. I have sent this under cover to my friend T. C., not knowing well where you are at present. If in Edinburgh, offer my benedictions upon your uncle's new alliance. I hope to be in Edinburgh soon, where I will not be without seeing you.

"I am, my dear pupil,

"Your affectionate friend,

"EDWARD IRVING."

"Wherewith" (namely, with the trial of his gifts) "being satisfied," he continues, in the dedication already quoted, "I took my journey homewards, waiting the good pleasure of the great Head of the Church. Many were the difficulties and obstacles which Satan threw in the way, and which threatened hard to defeat altogether our desire and our purpose of being united in one. Amongst others, one, which would have deterred many men, was my inability to preach in the Gaelic tongue, of which I knew not a word." This absurd stipulation originated in the connection of the Caledonian Chapel with the Caledonian Asylum, the directors of which are those whom he records as having thanked him formally—an institution originally intended for the orphan children of soldiers and sailors, and of whose office-bearers the Duke of York, the Commander-in-Chief, was president. This institution is still in existence, and until the disruption of the Church of Scotland, still sent its detachments of children into the galleries of the National Scotch Church, built to replace the little Caledonian Chapel. But at that period it was its connection with the great charity which alone gave the little chapel importance. Other Scotch churches, more flourishing and prosperous, were in existence; but the chapel in Hatton Garden had a trifling parliamentary allowance, in direct consideration of its connection with the Asylum, and the minister's power of preaching Gaelic. This initial difficulty called forth from Irving the following characteristic letter:—

"To my honoured friends, Mr Dinwiddie, Mr Simpson, Mr Robertson, Mr Hamilton, and others connected with the Caledonian Chapel, to whom I have the pleasure of being known, and who take an interest in my coming to London.

"GENTLEMEN, My friend Mr Laurie has called to report to me the result of the last meeting of Directors of the Asylum; and as Mr Hamilton requested him to make it known to me, I feel myself called upon to do my endeavour to make you comfortable under, and also if possible to extricate you from, the embarrassment in which you may feel yourselves.

"First. Let my interest be as nothing. The Lord will provide for me; and since I left you His providence has presented me with the offer of a chapel of ease in Dundee, with the probable reversion of the first vacant living in the place. This, of course, I refused. The people of New York are inquiring for me to succeed the great Dr Mason—at least are writing letters to that effect. This I do not think will come to any head, because I am not worthy of the honour. But I mention both to show you in what good hands my fortune is, when it is left to God alone.

"Secondly. But if, for the interests of your own souls, and religion in general, and the Scotch Church in particular, you do still desire my services among you, then I am ready at any call, and almost on any conditions, for my own spirit is bent to preach the Gospel in London.

"Thirdly. If the gentlemen of the Asylum would not mistake for importunity and seeking of a place, what I offer from a desire to mediate peace, and benefit the best interests of my countrymen, I pledge myself to study Gaelic; and if I cannot write it and preach it in six months, I give them my missive to be burdensome to them no longer. There was a time when the consciousness of my own powers would have made it seem as meanness so to condescend; but now the lowness of condescension for Christ's sake I feel to be the height of honour.

"Fourthly. But if not, and you are meditating, as Mr Hamilton says, to obtain another place of worship to which to call me, then be assured I shall not be difficult to persuade to come amongst you; and I shall not distress your means; but, content with little, minister, in humble dependence upon God, the free grace of the Gospel.

"Finally, gentlemen, should I never see your faces any more, my heart is towards you, and my prayers are for you, and the blessing of the Lord God shall be upon us all if we seek His face; and we shall dwell together in that New Jerusalem where there is no temple and no need of any pastors; but the Lamb doth lead them and feed them by rivers of living waters, and wipes away all tears from their eyes.

"Commend me to your families in love and brotherhood, and do ye all regard me as

"Your obliged and affectionate friend,

"Edward Irving."

"Glasgow, 21st February, 1822."

The Directors of the Caledonian Asylum were not, however, "so far left to themselves," as we say in Scotland, as to insist upon the six months of Gaelic study thus heroically volunteered. The Duke of York exerted his influence to set aside the stipulation; and after it had answered its purpose in stimulating the warmth of both parties, and adding a little more suspense and uncertainty to Irving's long probation, the difficulty was overcome. Or rather, to use his own words, "God, having proved our willingness, was pleased to remove this obstacle out of the way." Upon this another difficulty arose. It is a rule of the Church of Scotland not to ordain any minister over a congregation until they are

first certified that the people are able and prepared to provide him with a fit income—"to give him a livelihood," as Irving says simply. This is usually done in the form of a bond submitted to the Presbytery before the ordination, by which the stipend is fixed at a certain rate which the office-bearers pledge themselves to maintain. This was a difficult point for the poor little handful at Hatton Garden, who had only been able to keep themselves together by great exertions, and to whom only the valuable but scanty nucleus of fifty adherents belonged. The Presbytery in consequence demurred to the ordination; and once more the matter came to a temporary stand-still. Irving, however, was less prudent than the Presbytery.

"I am doing my utmost to get the Presbytery to consent to my ordination without a bond, and I hope to succeed," he writes to Mr W. Hamilton, one of the principal members of the Caledonian Chapel. "But if they will not, I come in June, ordination or no ordination: and if they are not content with the security I am content with, then I shall be content to do without their ordination and seek it elsewhere, or apply for it after. But I augur better."

The "bond," however, which Irving, generous and impetuous, would have been well content to dispense with, but which the prudent Presbytery insisted upon, was at length procured. "Another obstacle to my ordination your readiness," says Irving in the dedication already quoted, "without any request of mine, removed out of the way. To those brethren who came forward so voluntarily and so liberally on that occasion, the church and the minister of the church are much beholden; and all of us are beholden to God, who useth us, in any way, however humble, for the accomplishment of His good purposes."

Everything was now settled, and only the necessary ecclesiastical preliminaries remained. The young man was at the highest pitch of hope and anticipation. As he had not concealed his eagerness to go, he did not conceal the high expectations with which he entered the longed-for field. Expressions of his hopes and projects burst forth wherever he went—misconstrued, of course, by many; received with cold wonder, and treated as boasts and braggadocio; but understood and believed by some. And the only evidence of other sentiments which appears in his correspondence—contained in a letter to Dr Martin, evidently written in a moment of depression—still characteristically exhibits the high pitch of his anticipations. "There are a few things which bind me

to the world, and but a very few," writes the young man in this effusion of momentary weariness; "one is to make a demonstration for a higher style of Christianity, something more magnanimous, more heroical than this age affects. God knows with what success." These wonderful prophetic words, written in some moment of revulsion, when the very height of satisfaction and triumph had brought a sudden depth of temporary depression to his sensitive soul, are the only visible trace of those clouds which can never be wholly banished from the brightest firmament. During the last week of his residence in Glasgow, he went to Rosneath to visit and take farewell of his friend Mr Story, accompanied by another clerical friend, who went with him in wonder and dread, often inquiring how the farewell sermon, which was to be delivered on Sunday, could come into being. This good man perceived with dismay that Irving was not occupied about his farewell sermon, and declared with friendly vexation that if anything worthy of a leave-taking with the people of St John's was produced by the departing preacher under such circumstances, he would prove himself "the cleverest man in Scotland." Irving, however, was not dismayed. He went joyfully over loch and hill in that sweet holiday of hope. The world was all before him, and everything was possible. No more limits except those of the truth, nor obliteration under another man's shadow. All this time he had been but painfully fitting and putting his armour together; now he was already close to the lists, and heard the trumpets of the battle, with laughter like that of the war-horse; a little longer, and he should be in the field.

One day in this happy period, when going about the country with his friend, Irving, active, as of old, and full of glee and energy, leaped a gate which interposed in their way. This feat took the minister of Rosneath a little by surprise, as was natural. "Dear me, Irving," he exclaimed, "I did not think you had been so agile." Irving turned upon him immediately, "Once I read you an essay of mine," said the preacher, "and you said, 'Dear me, Irving, I did not think you had been so classical;' another time you heard me preach, 'Dear me, Irving, I did not know you had so much imagination.' Now you shall see what great things I will do yet!"

In this state of exulting expectation, he was not more patient than usual of the ordinary orthodoxy round him. While himself the sincerest son of his mother Church, and loving her very standards with a love which never died out of him, he

was always intolerant of the common stock of dry theology, and the certified *soundness* of dull men. "You are content to go back and forward on the same route, like this boat," he is reported to have said, as the party struck across the swelling waters of the Gair-loch; "but as for me, I hope yet to go deep into the ocean of truth." Words over-bold and incautious, like most of his words; yet wonderfully characteristic of the unconcealed exaltation of mind and hope in which he was.

So he returned to Glasgow, still accompanied by the alarmed and anxious friend, who could get no satisfaction about his farewell sermon,—such an occurrence as this solemn leave-taking, to which the little world looked forward, was an event in the history of the parish. It was an occasion such as preachers generally make the most of, and in which natural sentiment permits them a little freedom and deliverance from the ordinary restraints of the pulpit. And it was, perhaps, the first opportunity which Irving had ever had, with all eyes concentrated on himself, to communicate his thoughts without risk of the inevitable comparison, or the jealousy equally inevitable, of those who resented the idea of the assistant attempting to rival "the Doctor." He was now no longer Dr Chalmers's assistant, but a London minister elect; and when the bonds which bound him were unloosed, all the kindnesses of the past rushed warm upon the memory of the impulsive young man. He came into the pulpit glowing with a tender flush of gratitude; his discontent and weariness had dropped off from him, and existed no longer; he remembered only the love, the friendship, the good offices, the access he had obtained to many hearts. In that sermon, of which his companion despaired, the materials required little research or arrangement. The preacher had but to go back upon his own life of two years, seen in the warm reviving light of farewell kindness. He stood up in that pulpit, the last time he was to occupy it by right of his present position, and calmly told the astonished hearers of his own unpopularity, of their forbearance, yet not applause, of the "imperfections which had not been hid from their eyes," yet of the brotherly kindness which they, and especially the poor among them, had shown him; and proclaimed the praises of his leader with a warmth and heartfelt fulness which distressed and overwhelmed that sober Scotsman, unaccustomed to and disapproving of such demonstrations of attachment. Even upon that unenthusiastic and pre-occupied audience this farewell address seems to have made an impression. He

left them at peace with all men; and forgetting, as his affectionate temperament had a faculty for forgetting, all his annoyances and discomforts there. This farewell took away every possibility of bitterness. They were all his friends whom he left behind. He gave a wide, but warm, universal invitation to all. His house, his services, all that he could do, were freely pledged to whosoever of those parishioners might come to London and stand in need of him. He meant what he said, unguarded and imprudent as the expression was; and the people instinctively understood that he did so. It was thus with the warmest effusion of good-will that he left Glasgow, where, as in every other place, there was no lack of people who smiled at him, were doubtful of him, and patronized him with amusing toleration; but where nobody now or then had an unkind word to say.

When the farewell was over, and the sermon had met with its award, that good, puzzled companion, who went with the incomprehensible preacher to Rosneath, confided all his doubts and troubles on this subject to the private ear of a sympathizing friend. "Such a sermon would have taken *me* a week to write!" said this bewildered worthy. Possibly a lifetime would have been too short for such a feat, had the good man but known.

After this leave-taking Irving proceeded to Annan, to his father's house, there to appear once more before the Presbytery and go through his final "trials" for ordination. He chose to have this great solemnity of his life accomplished in the same church in which he had been baptized, and in which a third sad act awaited him. But there was no foreboding in the air of that sweet spring, which he spent in a kind of *retreat* of calm and retirement in his paternal house.

Immediately after his ordination he returned to Glasgow, and there assisted Dr Chalmers in the solemn and austere pomp—(pomp, not certainly of outward accessories, yet it is the only word by which I can describe the importance given to the half-yearly *occasion*, the "sacramental season" of Scotch piety, separated as it is by long array of devotional services from the ordinary course of the year)—of a Scottish communion. Irving himself describes this as "having experienced of my dear friend Dr Chalmers the singular honour of administering the sacrament to his parish flock, being my first act as an ordained minister." It was a graceful conclusion to his residence in Glasgow. From thence he set out, amid honour and good wishes, with the highest hopes in his mind, and charity in his heart, on the morning of the 8th of

July, 1822, to London. The future seems to have glowed before him with the indefinite brightness of early youth. All that memorable tragic life that lay solemnly waiting for him among the multitudinous roofs was hid in the haze of an illumination which never takes visible shape or form. But Nature, prevoyant, tingled into his heart an inarticulate thrill of prophecy. He went forth joyfully, wittingly, aware of all the hazards of that battle, into the deepest of the fight —amid all the exaltation of his hopes, never without a touch of forlorn dignity, acknowledged without any bitterness, the consciousness of a man who, however he might triumph hereafter, had known many a defeat already. Thus Irving went out of his youth and obscurity, out of trials and probation not often exceeded, to the solemn field full of lights and shadows greater than he dreamt of, where his course, for a time, was to be that of a conqueror, and where, at last, like other kings and victors before him, he was to fall, dauntless but mortal, with the loss of all save honour.

CHAPTER VII.

LONDON, 1822.

"On the second Sabbath of July, 1822," Irving began his labours in London. The fifty people who had signed his call, with such dependents as might belong to them, and a stray sprinkling of London Scotsmen, curious to hear what their new countryman might have to say for himself, formed all the congregation in the little chapel. The position was not one calculated to excite the holder of it into any flights of ambition, so far as its own qualities went. It was far from the fashionable and influential quarter of the town—a chapel attached to a charity, and a congregation reduced to the very lowest ebb in point of numbers. Nor did Irving enter upon his career with those aids of private friendship which might make an ordinary man sanguine of increasing his estimation and social sphere. Sir David Wilkie records his belief that the new preacher had introductions only to himself and Sir Peter Lawrie, neither of them likely to do much in the way of opening up London, great, proud, and critical, to the unknown Scotsman; and though this statement may

not be entirely correct, yet it is evident that he went with few recommendations, save to the little Scotch community amidst which, as people supposed, he was to live and labour. There are stories extant among that community still, concerning the early beginnings of his fame, which, after all that has passed since, are sadly amusing and strange, with their dim recognition of some popular qualities in the new minister, and mutual congratulations over a single adherent gained. Attracted by the enthusiastic admiration expressed by a painter almost unknown to fame, of the noble head and bearing of the new comer, another painter was induced to enter the little chapel where the stranger preached his first sermon. When the devotional services were over,—beginning with the Psalm, read out from the pulpit, in a voice so splendid and melodious that the harsh metres took back their original rhythm, and those verses so dear to Scotsmen justified their influence even to more fastidious ears,—the preacher stood up, and read as the text of his sermon the following words:—"Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for. I ask you, therefore, for what intent you have sent for me?" The sermon has not been preserved, so far as I am aware; but the text—remembered as almost all Irving's texts are remembered—conveys all the picturesque reality of the connection thus formed between the preacher and his people, as well as the solemn importance of the conjunction. The listening stranger was of course fascinated, and became not only a member of Mr Irving's church, but—more faithful to the Church than to the man—a supporter of the Church of Scotland after she had expelled him.

By degrees the little chapel began to fill. So far as appears, there was nobody of the least distinction connected with the place; and it is hard to understand how the great world came so much as to hear of the existence of the new popularity.

About a month later, Dr Chalmers, then making one of his rapid journeys through England, collecting the statistics of pauperism, came to London for the purpose of "introducing," according to Presbyterian uses and phraseology, though in this case somewhat after date, the young minister to his charge. This simple ceremony, which is entirely one of custom, and not of rule, is generally performed by the most prized friend of the new preacher—who simply officiates for him, and in his sermon takes the opportunity of recommending, in such terms as his friendship suggests, the young

pastor to the love and esteem of his people. Nobody could be better qualified to do this than Irving's master in their common profession; and it is creditable to both parties to note how they mutually sought each other's assistance at such eventful moments of their life. Dr Chalmers writes to his wife on arriving in London that he found Irving "in good taking with his charge. He speculates as much as before on the modes of preaching; is quite independent with his own people, and has most favourably impressed such men as Zachary Macaulay and Mr Cunningham with the conception of his talents. He is happy and free, and withal making his way to good acceptance and a very good congregation." Such, as yet, was the modest extent of all prognostications in his favour. The good Doctor goes on to relate how he was delighted to find that Irving had been asked to dine with him in the house of a Bloomsbury M.P.; evidently rejoicing in his opening of good society to his friend and disciple. The two returned together to Irving's lodgings after this dinner, and found there a hospitably-received, but apparently not too congenial guest, "Mr——, the singularity of whose manners you were wont to remark, who is his guest at present from Glasgow. This," remarks Dr Chalmers, "is one fruit of Mr Irving's free and universal invitation; but I am glad to find that he is quite determined as to visits, and apparently not much annoyed with the intrusion of callers." This is not the only evidence of the imprudent liberality of Irving's farewell invitation to the entire congregation of St John's. About the same time, to select one instance out of many, a poor man came to him seeking a situation, "a very genteel, respectable-looking young man," says the compassionate preacher, who refers him, in a letter full of beseeching sympathy, to his universal assistant and resource in all troubles—the good William Hamilton. Such petitioners came in multitudes through all his after-life—receiving sometimes hospitality, sometimes advice—recommendations to other people more likely to help them—kindness always. Such troubles come readily enough of themselves to the clergymen of a popular church; but the imprudence of inviting them was entirely characteristic of a man who would have served and entertained the entire world, if he could.

The next Sunday, when Dr Chalmers preached, the little Cross Street church was, of course, crowded. Wilkie, the most tenacious of Scotsmen, had been already led to attendance upon Irving's ministrations, and was there, accompanied by Sir Thomas Lawrence, to hear his still greater countryman.

But the brilliant crowd knew nothing yet of the other figure in that pulpit; and went as it came, a passing meteor. After this, Dr Chalmers concludes his estimate of his former colleague's condition and prospects in the following words: "Mr Irving I left at Homerton, and as you are interested in him I may say, once for all, that he is prospering in his new situation, and seems to feel as if in that very station of command and congeniality whereunto you have long known him to aspire. I hope that he will not hurt his usefulness by any kind of eccentricity or imprudence." In these odd and characteristic words Dr Chalmers, always a little impatient and puzzled even in his kindest moments about a man so undeniably eminent, yet so entirely unlike himself, dismisses Irving, and proceeds upon his statistical inquiries.

Meanwhile, in this station of "command and congeniality," as Chalmers so oddly terms it, Irving made swift and steady way. Writing at a later period to his congregation, he mentions a year as having passed before the tide of popularity swelled upon them beyond measure; but this must have been a failure of memory, for both the preacher and congregation were much earlier aware of the exceeding commotion and interest awakening around them.

The immediate origin of Irving's popularity, or rather of the flood of noble and fashionable hearers who poured in upon the little chapel in Hatton Garden all at once, without warning or premonition, is said to have been a speech of Canning's. Sir James Mackintosh had been by some unexpected circumstance led to hear the new preacher, and heard Irving in his prayer describe an unknown family of orphans belonging to the obscure congregation, as now "thrown upon the fatherhood of God." The words seized upon the mind of the philosopher, and he repeated them to Canning, who "started," as Mackintosh relates, and expressing great admiration, made an instant engagement to accompany his friend to the Scotch church on the following Sunday. Shortly after, a discussion took place in the House of Commons, in which the revenues of the Church were referred to, and the necessary mercantile relation between high talent and good *pay* insisted upon. No doubt it suited the statesman's purpose to instance, on the other side of the question, the little Caledonian chapel and its new preacher. Canning told the House that, so far from universal was this rule, that he himself had lately heard a Scotch minister, trained in one of the most poorly endowed of churches, and established in one of her outlying dependencies, possessed of no endowment

at all, preach the most eloquent sermon that he had ever listened to. The curiosity awakened by this speech is said to have been the first beginning of that invasion of "society" which startled Hatton Garden out of itself.

This first year, however, of his residence in London was so far obscure that he had as yet opened his voice only in the pulpit, and had consequently given the press and its vassals no vantage ground on which to assail him. It is, perhaps, with the new publicity which his first publication brought upon him in view, that he reminds his people how "for one year or nearly so, beginning with the second Sabbath of July, 1822, our union went on cementing itself by mutual acts of kindness in the shade of that happy obscurity which we then enjoyed. And I delight to remember that season of our early love and confidence, because the noisy tongues of men and their envious eyes were not upon us." With the best will in the world newspapers can take but little notice of a popular preacher, and periodicals of higher rank none at all, so that it was merely private criticism which commented upon the great new voice rising up in the heart of London. Besides the vague general facts of the rapidly raised enthusiasm, of applications for seats in the little Caledonian chapel, which would only accommodate about six hundred people, rising in one quarter to fifteen hundred, and Irving's own simple and gratified intimation that "the church overflows every day," there is very little certain information to be obtained of that first year of his progress in London. *Thirty Sermons*, taken down in shorthand by W. J. Oxford, but published only in 1835 after Irving's death, and forming the second volume of *Irving's Life and Works*—a production evidently got up to catch the market at the moment of his death—contains the only record remaining to us of his early eloquence. Nobody who reads these sermons, imperfect as they must be from the channel through which they come, will wonder at the rising glow of excitement which, when a second year set in, brought all London struggling for places to the little Scotch church, already fully occupied by its own largely increased congregation. They have, it is true, no factitious attractions, and genius, all warm and eloquent, has preached before without such results; but the reader will not fail to see the great charm of the preacher's life and labours already glowing palpable through those early proclamations of his message. Heart and soul, body and spirit, the man who speaks comes before us as we read; and I have no doubt that the first thrill of that charm which soon moved

all London, and the fascination of which never wholly faded from Irving's impassioned lips, lay in the fact that it was not mere genius or eloquence, great as their magic is, but something infinitely greater—a man, all visible in those hours of revelation, striving mightily with every man he met, in an entire personal unity which is possible to very few, and which never fails, where it appears, to exercise an influence superior to any merely intellectual endowment. Nor is it possible to read the few letters of this period, especially those above quoted, without feeling the deep satisfaction and content which at last possessed him, and the stimulus given to all his faculties by this profound consciousness of having attained the place suitable for him and the work which he could do. A long breath of satisfaction expands the breast which has so often swelled with the wistful sighs of longing and deferred hope. He is the "happy warrior" at length able to work out his life "upon the plan that pleased his youthful thought;" and his descriptions of his studies and the assiduity with which he set to work—his very self-examinations and complaints of his own unworthiness—are penetrated with this sentiment. He stands at the beginning of his career in an attitude almost sublime in its simplicity, looking forward with all the deep eagerness of an ambition which sought not its own advancement—a man to whom God had granted the desire of his heart. Few men consciously understand and acknowledge the fulness of this blessing, which indeed is not often conferred. Most people, indeed, find the position they had hoped and longed for, to fall far short of their hopes when it is attained. Irving was an exception to this common rule of humanity. He had reached the point to which he had been struggling, and amid all the joyful stir of his faculties to fill his place worthily, he never hesitates nor grudges to make full acknowledgment that he has got his desire. Not merely obedience and loyalty constrain him to the work, but gratitude to that Master who has permitted him to reach the very post of his choice. With a full heart and unhesitating words, and even more by a certain swell of heroic joy and content in everything he does and says, he testifies his thankfulness. It is no longer a man struggling, as most men do, through ungenial circumstances and adverse conditions whom we have to contemplate, but a man consciously and confessedly in the place which his imagination and wishes have long pointed out to him as the most desirable, the most suitable in the world for himself.

With this buoyant and joyful satisfaction, however, no mean motives mingled. Irving's temper was eminently social. He could not live without having people round him to love, and still more to admire and reverence, and even to follow; but no vain desire of "good society" seems to have moved the young Scotchman. He was faithful to Bloomsbury, which his congregation favoured; and when he set up his first household in London, though moving a little out of that most respectable of localities, he went further off instead of nearer the world of fashion, and settled in Myddelton Terrace, Pentonville. Here he lived in modest economy for some years, prodigal in nothing but charity. The society into which he first glided was still Scotch, even when out of the narrower ecclesiastical boundaries. David Wilkie was one of his earliest friends, and Wilkie brought him into contact with Allan Cunningham, a still closer countryman of his own. Thus he made gradual advances into the friendship and knowledge of the people about him; and with his young brother sharing his lodging and calling out his affectionate cares, with daily studies close and persevering as those he has himself recorded; with the little church Sunday by Sunday overflowing more fully—till accidents began to happen in the narrow streets about Hatton Garden, and at last the concourse had to be regulated by wiles, and the delighted, but embarrassed, managers of the little Caledonian Chapel found an amount of occupation thrust upon their hands for which they were totally unprepared, and had to hold the doors of their little building like so many besieged posterns against the assaults of the crowd; and with notable faces appearing daily more frequent in the throng of heads all turned towards the preacher, Edward Irving passed the first year of his life in London, and sprang out of obscurity and failure with a sudden unexampled leap to the giddiest height of popular applause, abuse, and idolatry, bearing the wonderful revolution with a steady but joyful simplicity, recognizing his success as openly as he had recognized the want of it, under which he suffered for so many silent years.

CHAPTER VIII.

1823.

THE second year of Irving's residence in London was one of the deepest importance, both to himself personally and to his reputation. It opened with the publication of his first book, the *Orations* and the *Argument for Judgment to come*, both of which had been partly preached in the form of sermons, and were now in an altered shape presented, not to any special religious body, but to the world which had gathered together to hear them, and to those who lead the crowd, the higher intellects and imaginations, whom neither religious books nor discourses usually address. In this volume it is perceptible that the preacher's mind had swelled and risen with the increase of his audience. Something more, it was apparent, was required of him than merely congregational ministrations; and he rises at the call to address those classes of men who are never to be found in numbers in any congregation, but who did drift into *his* audience in unprecedented crowds. In the preface to this publication he explains his own object with noble gravity, claiming for himself, with the most entire justice, though in such a way as naturally to call forth against him the jealous criticism of all self-satisfied preachers, a certain originality in the treatment of his subject, and desiring to be heard, not in the ear of the Church only, but openly before the greater tribunal of the world. At the height of his early triumph, looking back, he traces, through years of silence, his own steady protest against the ordinary strain of pulpit teaching; and with a startling earnestness—which that long conviction, for which already he had suffered both hardships and injustice, explains and justifies better than anything else can do—declares his knowledge of the great religious difficulty of the time. "It hath appeared to the author of this book," he says, going at once to the heart of the subject, and with characteristic frankness putting that first which was like to be taken most exception to, "from more than ten years' meditation upon the subject, that the chief obstacle to the progress of divine truth over the minds of men, is the want of its being sufficiently presented to them. In this Christian country there are perhaps nine-tenths of every class who know nothing at all about the application and advantages of the

single truths of revelation, or of revelation taken as a whole; and what they do not know they cannot be expected to reverence or obey. This ignorance, in both the higher and the lower orders, of religion as a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of the heart, is not so much due to the want of inquisitiveness on their part, as to the want of a sedulous and skilful ministry on the part of those to whom it is intrusted."

It cannot be surprising that such a beginning aroused at once all the antagonism with which innovations are generally regarded, and provoked those accusations of self-importance, self-exaltation, and vanity, which still are current among those who know nothing of the person they stigmatize. But not to say that he proves his case, which most unprejudiced readers will allow, nor that the grievance has gone on since his days, growing more and more intolerable, and calling forth many reproofs less serious but more bitter than Irving's, none who have accompanied us so far in this history, and perceived the exercises of patience which the preacher himself had to undergo, and the warm and strong conviction arising out of them which for years had hindered his own advancement, will be surprised at the plain speaking with which he heralds his own first performance. To get at the true way of addressing men, he himself had been for years a wearied listener and discouraged essayist at speech. At last he had found the secret; and the whole world round him had owned with an instantaneous thrill the power that was in it. With this triumphant vindication of his own doubts and dissatisfaction, to confirm him in his views, it was impossible for such a man to be silent on the general question. At this dazzling moment he had access to the highest intelligences in the country,—the teachers, the governors, the authorities of the land, had sought him out in that wilderness of mediocre London which had not even the antiquity of the city, nor any recommendation whatever, but was lost in the smoke, the dust, the ignoble din and bustle. And why was such an audience unusual? How was it that they were not oftener attracted, seized upon, made to hear God's Word and will, if need were, in spite of themselves? Thinking it over, he comes to the conclusion, not that his own genius was the cause, but that his brethren had not found the true method, had not learned the most effective way of discharging their duty. "They prepare for teaching gipsies, for teaching bargemen, for teaching miners, by apprehending their way of conceiving and estimating truth; and why not prepare," he asks, with eloquent wonder, and a truth which nobody can dispute, "for teaching

imaginative men, and political men, and legal men, and scientific men, who bear the world in hand? This preparation, judging from what he saw around him every day, Irving was well justified in believing he himself had attained; and he did not hesitate, while throwing himself boldly forth upon the world in a book—a farther and swifter messenger than any voice—to declare it plainly, the highest reason and excuse for the publication in which he now, with all the fervour and eloquence of a personal communication, addressed all who had ears to hear.

The preface to the *Orations*, which form the first part of the volume, is so characteristic and noble an expression of friendship, that it would be inexcusable to omit it.

"To the Rev. Thomas Chalmers, D.D.,
Minister of St John's Church, Glasgow.

"My honoured Friend,—I thank God, who directed you to hear one of my discourses, when I had made up my mind to leave my native land for solitary travel in foreign parts. That dispensation brought me acquainted with your good and tender-hearted nature, whose splendid accomplishments I knew already; and you now live in the memory of my heart more than in my admiration. While I laboured as your assistant, my labours were never weary, they were never enough to express my thankfulness to God for having associated me with such a man, and my affection to the man with whom I was associated. I now labour in another field, among a people whom I love, and over whom God hath, by signs unequivocal, already blessed my ministry. You go to labour likewise in another vineyard, where may the Lord bless your retired meditations as he hath blessed your active operations. And may He likewise watch over the flock of our mutual solicitude, now about to fall into other hands. The Lord be with you and your household, and render unto you manifold for the blessings which you have rendered unto me. I could say much about these *Orations* which I dedicate to you, but I will not mingle with any literary or theological discussion this pure tribute of affection and gratitude which I render to you before the world, as I have already done into your private ear. I am, my honoured friend, yours, in the bonds of the gospel,

"Edward Irving.

"Caledonian Church, Hatton Garden, July, 1823."

The *Argument for Judgment to come*, a longer and more elaborate work, which occupies the larger half of the same volume, seems to have been specially suggested to the mind of the writer by the two *Visions of Judgment* of Southey and Byron. The profane flattery of the one, most humiliating tribute to both giver and receiver which the office of laureate has, in recent ages at least, extorted from any poet, and the disgusting parody of the other, excited in Irving all the indig-

nation and repugnance which was natural to a right-thinking and pious mind. His feeling on the subject seems warmer than those miserable productions were worthy of exciting; but it is natural that a contemporary should regard such degradations of literature with a livelier indignation than it is possible to feel when natural oblivion has mercifully swallowed them up. The *Argument* was dedicated, like the *Orations*, to one of his earlier friends, the Rev. Robert (afterwards well known as Dr) Gordon of Edinburgh; this highest mark of regard or gratitude, which it is in an author's power to bestow, being in both cases characteristically conferred on men who could in no way advance or aid him in his career, but whom he distinguished from pure gratitude and friendship only. Inscribed with these names, he sent his first venture into the yet untried world of literature, exposing himself freely, with all his undeniable peculiarities both of mind and diction, to a flood of critics, probably never, before or since, so universally excited about any volume of religious addresses which ever came from the press.

In spite of the universal assaults made against the book, the *Orations* and *Argument* ran into a third edition in little more than as many months; and remain, now that all their critics are forgotten, among the most notable examples of religious eloquence. But it is not our business to criticise these works, which have been long before the public, and can be still judged on their separate merits. The author, meanwhile, was approaching a crisis in his life still more important than the publication of his first book. Longer than the patriarch he had waited for his Rachel: and now an engagement, which had lasted, I believe, eleven years, and had survived long separation, and many changes, both of circumstances and sentiment, was at length to be fulfilled. In the end of September, 1823, Irving left London and travelled by several successive stages to Kirkcaldy, where his bride awaited him.

The Sunday before his marriage, being now no longer a private man, with his time at his own disposal, he went to Haddington to preach among his early friends. There, where he had made his youthful beginning in life, and where, when a probationer, he had preached with the ordinary result of half-contemptuous toleration, his coming now stirred all the little town into excitement. The boys who had been his pupils were now men, proud to recall themselves to his notice; and with a warmer thrill of local pride, in recollection of his temporary connection with their burgh, the people of Haddington welcomed the man whom great London had discovered to be the greatest orator

of his day. Wherever he went, indeed, he was hailed with that true Scottish approbation and delight which always hails the return of a man who has done his duty by Scotland, and made himself famous—a satisfaction no way lessened by the recollection that Scotland herself had not been the first to discover his great qualities.

"Irving is in Scotland," writes Dr Gordon from Edinburgh to Irving's friend, Mr Story. "I have seen him twice for a little. The same noble fellow—and in spite of all his *alleged* egotism, a man of great simplicity and straightforwardness. He is to be married to-day, I believe, to Miss Martin, of Kirkcaldy." This was on the 13th of October. The long-engaged couple were married in that Manse of Kirkcaldy which had witnessed so many youthful chapters in Irving's life, and which was yet more to be associated with his deepest and most tender feelings. They were married by the grandfather of the bride, a venerable old man—brother, as I believe has been already mentioned, of the celebrated Scotch painter, David Martin, whom the imagination of Scotland fondly holds as a second Reynolds—and in his own person a man much venerated, the father of the clergy in his locality; in the presence of a body of kindred worthy of a family in which three generations flourished together. I will not linger upon any description of Irving's wife. The character of a woman who has never voluntarily brought herself before the public is sacred to her children and her friends. She stood by her husband bravely through every after vicissitude of his life; was so thorough a companion to him, that he confided to her, in detail, all the thoughts which occupied him, as will be seen in after letters; received his entire trust and confidence, piously laid him in his grave, brought up his children, and lived for half of her life a widow indeed, in the exercise of all womanly and Christian virtues. If her admiration for his genius, and the short-sightedness of love, led her rather to seek the society of those who held him in a kind of idolatry, than of friends more likely to exert upon him the beneficial influence of equals, and so contributed to the clouding of his genius, it is the only blame that has ever been attached to her. She came of a family who were all distinguished by active talent and considerable character; and with all the unnoted valour of a true woman, held on her way through the manifold agonies—in her case most sharp and often repeated—of life.

After this event a period of wandering followed, to refresh the fatigue of the preacher, after his first year-long conflict with that life of London which, sooner or later, kills almost

all its combatants. The bridal pair appear in glimpses over the summer country. One evening, sitting at the window of his quiet manse, at the mouth of one of the loveliest and softest lochs of Clyde, the minister of Rosneath saw a vast figure approaching through the twilight, carrying—an adjunct which seems to have secured immediate recognition—a portmanteau on its Herculean shoulder. It was Irving, followed by his amused and admiring wife, who had come down from Glasgow by one of the Clyde steamers, and had walked with his burden from the other side of the little peninsula. "And do you mean to say that you have carried *that* all the way?" cried the astonished host as he hastened to welcome his unexpected visitors. "And I would like to know," answered the bridegroom, with all the gleeful consciousness of strength, stretching out the mighty arms which he had just relieved, "which of your caitiffs could have carried it better!" A little later the pair are at Annan, awakening in the hearts of young nephews and nieces there their earliest recollections of pleasure and jubilee. Irving was not preaching, so far as there is any record; he was idling and enjoying himself; and, with him, these words meant making others enjoy themselves, and leaving echoes of holiday everywhere. So late as the beginning of November he was still in Scotland—in Glasgow—where Dr Chalmers, at the height of his splendid social experiments, and in full possession of his unrivalled influence, a kind of prince-bishop in that great and difficult town, had felt his strength fail, and—yielding to a natural distaste for the atmosphere in which, not following his own inclinations, except in the fashion of his work, he had laboured for years—had resigned his great position for the modest tranquillity of a professor's chair in St Andrew's, and was just taking leave of the people over whom he had held so wonderful a sway. There Irving went to listen to the last sermon of his master in the ministry. The situation is a remarkable one. He was again to take part in the services in that place where he had filled, loyally, yet with many commotions and wistful dissatisfaction in his mind, a secondary place, so short a time before. A world of difference lay in the year of time which had passed since then. Chalmers himself had not turned the head of any community as his former assistant had turned the multitudinous heads of London. The man who had gone away from them, forlorn and brave, upon an expedition more like that of a forlorn hope than an enterprise justified by ordinary wisdom, had come back with all the laurels of sudden fame, a conqueror and hero. Yet here again he stood so entirely in his old

place that one can suppose the brilliant interval must have looked like a dream to Irving as he gazed upon the crowd of familiar faces, and saw himself lost and forgotten, as of old, in the absorbing interest with which everybody turned to the great leader under whom they had lived and laboured. Had he been the egotist he was called, or had he come in any vain-glorious hope of confounding those who did not discover his greatness, he would have chosen another moment to visit Glasgow. But he came in the simplicity of his heart to stand by his friend at a solemn moment, as his friend had stood by him; to hear the last sermon, and offer the last good wishes.

This momentary conjunction of these two remarkable men makes a picture pleasant to dwell on. Both had now separated their names from that busy place; the elder and greater to retire into the noiseless seclusion, or rather into the little social "circles" and coteries, of a limited society, and the class-rooms of a science that was not even theological; the younger, the secondary and overlooked, to a position much more in the eye of the world, more dazzling, giddy, and glorious than the pulpit of St John's, even while Chalmers occupied it, could ever have been. At this last farewell moment they stood as if that year, so wonderful to one of them, had never been; and Irving, like a true man, stepped back out of his elevation, and took loyally his old secondary place. "When Dr Chalmers left the pulpit, after preaching his farewell sermon," says Dr Hanna, his biographer, "it was entered by the Rev. Edward Irving, who invited the vast congregation to accompany him, as with solemn pomp and impressive unction he poured out a prayer for that honoured minister of God who had just retired from among them." This momentary appearance in that familiar pulpit, not to display the eloquence which had made him famous since he last stood in it, but simply to crown with prayers and blessing the farewell of his friend, is the most graceful and touching conclusion which could have been given to Irving's connection with Glasgow; or at least—since after events have linked his memory for ever with that of this great and wealthy town—with the congregation of St John's.

The newly-married pair travelled to London by the paternal house in Annan. Accompanied by some of their relations from thence, they posted to Carlisle, the modern conveniences of travel being then undreamt of. When they were about to cross the Sark, the little stream which at that point divides Scotland from England, Irving, with a pleasant bridegroom

fancy, made his young wife alight and walk over the bridge into the new country which henceforward was to be her home. So this idyllic journey comes to an end. After the bridge of Sark and its moorland landscape, we see no more of the travellers till they reappear in the bustle of London, where idyls have no existence.

His first occupation—or at least one of the first things which occupied him after his return — must have been the third edition of his *Orations* and *Argument*, with the characteristic preface which he prefixed to it. The critics who assailed him must have been pretty well aware beforehand, from all he had said and written, that Irving was not a man to be overawed by any strictures that could be made upon him. When in the heat and haste of the moment, one edition pursuing another through the press, and one blow after another ringing on his shield, the orator seized his flaming pen and wrote defiance to all his opponents, it is not difficult to imagine the kind of production which must have flashed from that pen of Irving. Allowing that an author's reply to criticism is always a mistaken and imprudent proceeding, and that Irving's contempt and defiance are not written in perfect *taste* (angry as the expression would have made him) or charity, yet we should have been sorry not to have had the daring onslaught upon these troublesome skirmishers of literature, from whose stings, alas, neither greatness nor smallness can defend the unfortunate wayfarer; and the dignified vindication of his own style and diction, which is as noble and modest a profession of literary allegiance as can be found anywhere. "I have been accused of affecting the antiquated manner of ages and times now forgotten," he says in his defence. "The writers of those times are too much forgotten, I lament, and their style of writing hath fallen out of use; but the time is fast approaching when this stigma shall be wiped away from our prose, as it is fast departing from our poetry. I fear not to confess that Hooker and Taylor and Baxter in Theology, Bacon and Newton and Locke in Philosophy, have been my companions, as Shakspeare and Spenser and Milton have been in poetry. I cannot learn to think as they have done, which is the gift of God; but I can teach myself to think as disinterestedly, and to express as honestly what I think and feel. Which I have, in the strength of God, endeavoured to do." What he said of his critics is naturally much less dignified; but, in spite of a few epithets which were much more current in those days than now, the whole of this preface, much unlike ordinary prefaces, which authors go on writing with an amazing innocent faith in the

attention of the public, and which few people ever dream of looking at, is one of the most eloquent and characteristic portions of the volume. Indeed, I know scarcely any volume of Irving's works of which this might not be said. In his dedications and prefaces, he carries on a kind of rapid autobiography, and takes his reader into his heart and confidence, in those singular addresses, in a manner, so far as I am aware, quite unprecedented in literature.

He was now fully launched upon the exciting and rapid course of London life—a life which permits little leisure and less tranquillity to those embarked upon it. One of his earliest acquaintances was Mr Basil Montagu—in whose hospitable house Irving found the kindest reception and the most congenial society; and even more than these, found consolation and guidance, when first excited and then disgusted, according to a very natural and oft-repeated process, with the blandishments of society, and the coldness of those religious circles which admit nobody who does not come with certificates of theological soundness and propriety in his hand. Mr Montagu drew him to his own house, brought him into a circle above fashion, yet without its dangerous seductions, and introduced him to Coleridge and many other notable men. And Irving, brought into the warm and affectionate intercourse of such a household, and assisted, moreover, by that *glamour* which always remained in his own eyes and elevated everything he saw, learned to gain that acquaintance with men—men of the highest type, men of a class with which hitherto he had been unfamiliar, in which the hereditary culture of generations had culminated, and which, full of thought and ripened knowledge, was not to be moved by generalities—which he could not have learned either in his secondary rank of scholarship in Edinburgh, nor among the merchants of Glasgow. He saw, but in the best and most advantageous way, what every thoughtful mind, which lives long enough, is brought to see something of—how deeply nature has to do with all the revolutions of the soul; how men are of an individuality all unthought of; and how mighty an agent, beyond all mights of education or training, is constitutional character. In Mr Montagu's house he saw "the soil" in many a rich and fruitful variation, and came to know how, by the most diverse and different paths, the same end may be attained. If his natural impatience of everything contracted, mean, and narrow-minded gained force in this society, it is not a surprising result. But he had always been sufficiently ready to contemn and scorn common-place boundaries. His friends in Bedford Square,

and their friends, taught him to appreciate more thoroughly the unities and diversities of man.

Scarcely any record remains of the intercourse which existed between Irving and Coleridge, an intercourse which was begun, as has just been seen, by Mr Montagu. It lasted for years, and was full of kindness on the part of the philosopher, and of reverential respect on that of Irving, who, following the natural instinct of his own ingenuous nature, changed in an instant, in such a presence, from the orator who, speaking in God's name, assumed a certain austere pomp of position—more like an authoritative priest than a simple presbyter—into the simple and candid listener, more ready to learn than he was to teach, and to consider the thoughts of another, than to propound his own. Nothing, indeed, can be more remarkable, more unlike the opinion many people have formed of him, or more true to his real character, than the fact, very clearly revealed by all the dedicatory addresses to which we have referred, that in his own consciousness he was always learning; and not only so, but with the utmost simplicity and frankness acknowledging what he had learned. If imagination had anything to do with this serious and sad history, it would not be difficult to picture those two figures, so wonderfully different, looking down from the soft Highgate slopes upon that uneasy world beneath, which, to one of them, was but a great field of study, proving, as never any collection of human creatures proved before, all the grievous but great conclusions of philosophy; while to the other, it raged with all the incessant conflict of a field of battle, dread agony of life and death, through which his own cry "to the rescue!" was continually ringing, and his own hand snatching forth from under trampling feet the wounded and the fallen. Here Irving changed the common superficial idea of the world's conversion—that belief calmly held or earnestly insisted on in the face of acknowledged disappointment in many missionary efforts, and the slowness and lingering issues of even the most successful, which is common to most churches. "That error," as he himself says, "under which almost the whole of the Church is lying, that the present world is to be converted unto the Lord, and so slide by a natural inclination into the Church—the present reign of Satan hastening, of its own accord, into the millennial reign of Christ. For this doctrine he learned to substitute the idea of a dispensation drawing towards its close, and—its natural consequence in a mind so full of love to God and man—of an altogether glorious and overwhelming revolution yet to come, in which all the dead

society, churches, kingdoms, fashions of this world, galvanically kept in motion until the end, should be finally burned up and destroyed. Whether this development of wistful and anxious faith, and the "deliverance" conveyed by it—or whether that more subtle view of the ancient and much-assailed Calvinistic doctrine of election, which sets forth God's message and messengers as specially addressed to "the worthy," and universally received by them wherever the message is heard—was the substance of what the preacher learned from the poet-philosopher, there is no information.

Such was his society and occupations when he returned with the companion of his life from Scotland. He brought his wife into a house in which the tumult of London was perpetually heard; not into a quiet ecclesiastical society, like that which generally falls to the lot of the wives of Scotch ministers, but to a much-disturbed dwelling-place, constantly assailed by visitors, and invaded by agitations of the world. Among all the other excitements of popularity, there came also the pleasant excitement of a new church about to be built, of size proportioned to the necessities of the case. The same crowds and commotion still surrounded the Caledonian Chapel, but they became more bearable in the prospect of more roomy quarters. An unfailing succession of private as well as public calls upon the kindness, help, and hospitality of a man whom everybody believed in, and who proffered kindness to all, helped to increase the incessant motion and activity of that full and unresting life. Thus within eighteen months after his arrival in London had the Scotch preacher won the friendship of many not specially open to members of his profession and church, and made himself a centre of personal beneficences not to be counted. If ever pride can be justified, Edward Irving might have been justified in a passing thrill of that exultation when he brought his wife from the quiet manse which all along had looked on and watched his career, not sure how far its daughter's future was safe in the hands of a man so often foiled, yet so unconquerable, to place her in a position and society which few clergymen of his church have ever attained, and indeed which few men in any church, however titled or dignified, could equal. The peculiarity of his position lay in the fact that this singular elevation belonged to himself, and not to his rank, which was not susceptible of change; that his influence was extended a thousand-fold, with little addition to his means, and none to his station; and that, while he moved among men of the highest intellect and position, neither his transcendent popularity nor his acknowledged genius ever changed that pri-

mitive standing-ground of priest and pastor which he always held with primitive tenacity. The charm of that conjunction is one which the most worldly mind of man cannot refuse to appreciate; and perhaps it is only on the members of a church which owns no possibility of promotion, that such a delicate and visionary though real rank could by common verdict be bestowed.

CHAPTER IX.

1824.

The year 1824 began with no diminution of those incessant labours. It is wonderful how a man of so great a frame, and of out-of-door tendencies so strong and long cherished, should have been able to bear, as Irving did, confinement in one of the most town-like and closely-inhabited regions of London. In Pentonville, indeed, faint breaths of country air might at that period be supposed to breathe along the tidy, genteel streets; but in Bloomsbury, where many of Irving's friends resided, or in the dusty ranges of Holborn, where his church was, no such refreshment can have been practicable. Nor had the Presbyterian minister any relief from curates, or assistance of any kind. His entire pulpit services—and, according to his own confession, his sermons averaged an hour and a quarter in length—his prayers, as much exercises of the intellect as of the heart, came from his own lips and mind, unaided by the intervention of any other man; and besides his literary labours, and the incessant demands which his great reputation brought upon him, he had all the pastoral cares of his own large congregation to attend to, and was ready at the call of the sick, the friendless, and the stranger, whensoever they addressed him.

His next point of contact with the astonished and critical world, which watched for a false step on his part, and was ready to pounce upon anything, from an imperfect or complicated metaphor to an unsound doctrine, occurred in the May of this year, when he had been selected to preach one of the anniversary sermons of the London Missionary Society. The invitation to do this was presumed to be a compliment to Irving, and voucher of his popularity, as well as a prudent enlistment of the "highest talent," to give attraction to the

yearly solemnity of the Society. Had the London committee been wise they would scarcely have chosen so daring and original an orator to celebrate their anniversary; since Irving was exactly the man whose opinions or sentiments on such a topic were not to be rashly predicated. The preliminaries of this discourse, as afterwards described by himself, were not such as generally usher in a missionary sermon. Instead of reading up the records of the society, and making careful note of the causes for congratulation and humility, as it would have been correct to have done—instead of laying up materials for a glowing account of its progress and panegyric upon its missionaries, Irving's preparations ran in the following extraordinary channel:—

"Having been requested by the London Missionary Society," he writes, "to preach upon the occasion of their last anniversary, I willingly complied, without much thought of what I was undertaking; but when I came to reflect upon the sacredness and importance of the cause given into my hands, and the dignity of the audience before which I had to discourse, it seemed to my conscience that I had undertaken a duty full of peril and responsibility, for which I ought to prepare myself with every preparation of the mind and of the spirit. To this end, retiring into the quiet and peaceful country, among a society of men devoted to every good and charitable work, I searched the Scriptures in secret; and in their pious companies conversed of the convictions which were secretly brought to my mind concerning the missionary work. And thus, not without much prayer to God and self-devotion, I meditated those things which I delivered in public before the reverend and pious men who had honoured me with so great a trust."

It may easily be supposed that a discourse, thus premeditated and composed by a man whose youth was full of missionary projects such as no practical nineteenth century judgment could designate otherwise than as the wildest romance, was not likely to come to such a sermon as should content the London or any other Missionary Society. It was not an exposition of the character of a missionary as apprehended by an heroic mind, capable of the labours it described, which had been either wished or requested. But the directors of the Society, having rashly tackled with a man occupied, not with their most laudable pursuits and interests, but with the abstract truth, had to pay the inevitable penalty. The day came. In preparation for a great audience the chapel in Tottenham Court Road, once known as the Tabernacle, and built for Whitfield, was selected. The day was wet and dreary, but the immense building was crowded long before the hour of meeting, many finding it impossible to get

admittance. So early was the congregation assembled, that to keep so vast a throng occupied, the officials considered it wise to begin the preliminary services a full hour before the time appointed. When the preacher appeared at last, his discourse was so long that he had to pause, according to the primitive custom of Scotland, twice during its course, the congregation in the intervals singing some verses of a hymn. One of the hearers on that occasion tells that, for three hours and a half, he, only a youth, and though a fervent admirer of the orator, still susceptible to fatigue, sat jammed in and helpless near the pulpit, unable to extricate himself. All this might have but added to the triumph; and even so early in his career it seems to have been understood of Irving, that the necessity of coming to an end did not occur to him, and that not the hour, but the subject, timed his addresses, so that his audience were partly warned of what they had to look for. But the oration which burst upon their astonished ears was quite a different matter. It had no connection with the London Missionary Society. It was the ideal missionary—the Apostle lost behind the veil of centuries—the Evangelist commissioned of God, who had risen out of Scripture and the primeval ages upon the gaze of the preacher. He discoursed to the startled throng, met there to be asked for subscriptions—to have their interest stimulated in the regulations of the committee, and their eyes directed towards its worthy and respectable representatives, each drawing a little congregation about him in some corner of the earth—of a man without staff or scrip, without banker or provision, abiding with whomsoever would receive him, speaking in haste his burning message, pressing on without pause or rest through the world that lay in wickedness—an Apostle responsible to no man—a messenger of the cross. The intense reality natural to one who had all but embraced that austere martyr vocation in his own person, gave force to the picture he drew. There can be little doubt that it was foolishness to most of his hearers, and that, after the fascination of his eloquence was over, nine-tenths of them would recollect, with utter wonder, or even with possible contempt, that wildest visionary conception. But that it was true for him, nobody, I think, who has followed his course thus far, will be disposed either to doubt or to deny.

The wildest hubbub rose, as was natural, after this extraordinary utterance; but through the midst of it all, preoccupied and lost in the contemplation of that most true yet most impossible servant of God whom he had evoked from

the past and the future to which all things are possible, Irving, all unaware of the commotion he had caused, went on his way, not dreaming that anybody could suppose the present machinery and economics of common-place missionary work injured by that high vision of the perfection of a character which has been, and which yet may be again. He says, he "was prepared to resist any application which might possibly be made to me" to publish his sermon; an entirely unnecessary precaution, since the complacency of the London Society evidently did not carry them the length of paying the preacher of so unwelcome an address that customary compliment. But in the commotion that followed—in the vexation and wrath of "the religious world," and the astonished outcry of everybody connected with missions—the preacher, not less astonished than themselves, discovered that his doctrine was new, and unwelcome to the reverend and pious men for whose hearing he had so carefully prepared it. When he heard his high conception of the missionary character denounced as an ill-timed rhetorical display, and that which he had devoutly drawn from the only inspired picture of such messengers characterized as not only visionary and wild, but an implied libel upon their present representatives, his sincere heart was roused and startled. He went back to his New Testament, the only store of information he knew of. He drew forth Paul and Barnabas, Peter and John, first missionaries, apostles sent of God. The longer he pondered over them the more his picture rose and expanded. Was not the errand the same, the promise of God the same?—and why should the character of the individual be so different? The natural result followed; confirmed by further examination, and strengthened by opposition, the sermon enlarged, and grew into an appeal to the world. Only the first part of this work, intended to be completed in four parts, was ever finished, the mind of the preacher being more deeply engrossed from day to day in that law of God which was his meditation day and night, and directed ever to new unfolding of doctrine and instruction. This publication was dedicated to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in the remarkable letter which follows:—

"My dear and honoured Friend,—Unknown as you are in the true character of your mind or your heart to the greater part of your countrymen, and misrepresented as your works have been by those who have the ear of the vulgar, it will seem wonderful to many that I should make choice of you from the circle of my friends, to dedicate to you these beginnings of my thoughts upon the most important subject of

these or any times; and when I state the reason to be, that you have been more profitable to my faith in orthodox doctrine, to my spiritual understanding of the Word of God, and to my right conception of the Christian Church, than any or all the men with whom I have entertained friendship and conversation, it will, perhaps, still more astonish the mind and stagger the belief of those who have adopted, as once I did myself, the misrepresentations which are purchased for a hire and vended for a price, concerning your character and works. . . . I have partaken so much high intellectual enjoyment from being admitted into the close and familiar intercourse with which you have honoured me; and your many conversations concerning the revelations of the Christian faith have been so profitable to me in every sense, as a student and preacher of the gospel; as a spiritual man and a Christian pastor; and your high intelligence and great learning have at all times so kindly stooped to my ignorance and inexperience, that not merely with the affection of friend to friend, and the honour due from youth to experienced age, but with the gratitude of a disciple to a wise and generous teacher, of an anxious inquirer to the good man who hath helped him in the way of truth, I do presume to offer you the first fruits of my mind since it received a new impulse towards truth, and a new insight into its depths from listening to your discourse. Accept them in good part, and be assured that, however insignificant in themselves, they are the offering of a heart which loves your heart, and of a mind which looks up with reverence to your mind.

"Edward Irving."

These lavish thanks, bestowed with a rash prodigality, which men of less generous and effusive temperament could never be brought to understand, were, according to all ordinary rules of reason, profoundly imprudent. To put such a name as that of Coleridge,* under any circumstances, on a work which its author was already assured would be examined with the most eager and angry jealousy, and in which a great many of his religious contemporaries would but too gladly find some suspicious tendency, was of itself imprudent. But so, I fear, was the man to whom giving of thanks and rendering of acknowledgments was always joyfully congenial. It was not in his nature either to guard himself from the suspicion of having received more than he really had re-

* In Leigh Hunt's correspondence, published since the above was written, occurs the following notice of this dedication in a letter from Charles Lamb: "I have got acquainted with Mr Irving, the Scotch preacher, whose fame must have reached you. Judge how his own sectarists must stare when I tell you he has dedicated a book to S. T. C., acknowledging to have learnt more from him than from all the men he ever conversed with. He is a most amiable, sincere, modest man in a room, this Boanerges in the temple. Mrs Montagu told him the dedication would do him no good. 'That shall be a reason for doing it,' was his answer." The kind Elia adds, "Judge, now, whether this man be a quack."

ceived, or to provide against the danger of connecting himself openly with all whom he loved or honoured.

This publication was received with shouts of angry criticism from all sides, and called forth an *Expostulatory Letter* from Mr W. Orme, the secretary of the outraged Missionary Society, which, however, being long ago forgotten, needs not to be here discussed.

A little further on we are introduced into the bosom of the modest home in Pentonville, where domestic life and its events had now begun to expand the history of the man. The swell of personal joy with which the following letter breaks into the record of outside events and interests, will charm most people who have had occasion to send similar announcements. It is addressed to Dr Martin:—

"Pentonville, 22nd July, 1824.

"My dear Father,—Isabella was safely delivered of a boy (whom may the Lord bless), at half-past eleven this forenoon, and is, with her child, doing well; and the grandmother, aunt, and father newly constituted, with the mother, are rejoicing in the grace and goodness of God.

"Mrs Martin and Margaret are both well, and salute you grandfather, wishing with all our hearts that you may never lay down the name, but enjoy it while you live.

"I am well, and I think the pleasure of the Lord is prospering in my hand. A wide door and effectual is opened to me, and the Lord is opening my own eyes to the knowledge of the truth. Your arrival and our great-grandfather's (whom, with all the grand-aunts, salute in our name—I know not what they owe us for such accumulated honours) is expected with much anxiety. I feel I shall be much strengthened by your presence.

"Your dutiful Son,

"Edward Irving."

This child—child of a love, and hope, and sorrow not to be described; celebrated, afterwards, as poet's child has rarely been, by such sublimated grief and pathetic resignation as have wept over few graves so infantine—was afterwards baptized, by the great-grandfather above referred to, in the presence of the two intermediate generations of his blood. The child was called Edward; and was to his father, with emphatic and touching verity, "his excellency and the beginning of his strength." The little tale of his existence sent echoes through all the strong man's life—echoes so tender and full of such heart-breaking pathos, as I think no human sorrow ever surpassed. In the mean time, however, all was thankfulness in the increased household; and the patriarchal assemblage of kindred, father, and father's father,

could have prophesied nothing but life and length of days to the child of such a vigorous race.

Along with all the public and domestic occurrences which filled this busy life, there are connected such links of charity and private beneficence as put richer and idler men to shame. Irving's charity was not alms, but that primitive kindness of the open house and shared meal, which is of all modes of charity the most difficult and the most delicate—a kind almost unknown to our age and conventional life. To illustrate this, we may quote one tragical episode, unfortunately more common among Scotch families, and, indeed, among families of all nations, than it is comfortable to know of:—A young man, a probationer of the Church of Scotland, who had been unsuccessful in getting a church, or, apparently, in getting any employment, had turned such thoughts as he had, in the way of literature, and had written and published, apparently by subscription, a *Treatise on the Sabbath*. Having exhausted Edinburgh, he came to London, with the vain hopes that bring all adventurers there. He seems to have had no particular talent or quality commending him to the hearts of men. Into London he dropped obscurely, nobody there finding anything to respect in his half-clerical pretensions or unremarkable book. He went to see Irving occasionally, and was observed to fall into that dismal shabbiness which marks the failure of heart and hope in men born to better things. Irving had bought his book largely, and stimulated others to do the same, and now watched with anxiety the failure and disappointment which he could not avert. One evening a man appeared at his house with a note, which he insisted upon delivering into Irving's own hand. The note was from the unfortunate individual whom we have just described. It was written in utter despair and shame. "The messenger was the landlord of a 'low public-house,'" says a lady, a relative of Irving's, then resident in his house, and acquainted with the whole melancholy story, "where M—— had been for three days and nights, and had run up a bill which he had no means of paying. It appeared that he had boasted of his intimacy with Mr Irving, and the man had offered to carry a note from him to 'his great friend,' who, M—— declared, would at once release him from such a trifling embarrassment. Edward was puzzled what to do, but at last resolved to go to the house, pay the bill, and bring the unfortunate man home. He went, accordingly, desiring me to get a room ready. M—— was very glad to get his bill paid, but would scarcely leave the house, till Edward

told him he would free him only on condition that he came with him at once. None of us saw him for a day or two, as he was, or pretended to be, so overcome with shame that he could not look us in the face. But he soon got over this, and joined the family party. Decent clothes were obtained for him, and we hoped he was really striving to give up his bad habits." This continued for some time, when, "one day, he went out after dinner and did not return. Two or three days passed, and no account could we obtain of him. At last, another note was brought, written in the same self-condemnatory strain, begging for forgiveness and assistance." There is little need for following out the sickening story. Everywhere there are families who have received the same letters, made the same searches, heard the same humiliating confessions and entreaties,—but only for those who belong to them, whom nature makes dear amid all wretchedness, to whom the hearts of mothers and sisters cling, and in whose behalf love still hopes against hope, are such cares usually undertaken. To do it all for a stranger—to bring the half-conscious wretch into a virtuous home, to wile him with domestic society and comfort, to seek him out again and again, pay debts for him, find employments for him, receive his melancholy penitences, and encourage what superficial attempts after good there may be in him—is a charity beyond the powers of most men. In rural places, here and there, such good Samaritans may be found; but what man in London ventures to take upon himself such a responsibility? This doleful story throws a light upon the private economics of the Pentonville house which I should be sorry to lose.

Those who were in more innocent need were received with still more cordial welcomes. Friends pondering where to cast their lot—people meditating a change of residence, and desirous of seeing how the land lay—found a little mount of vision in the house of the great preacher from which to investigate and decide. A stream of society thus flowed by him, fluctuating as one went and another came. If any man among his friends was seized with a thought that London might be a sphere more desirable than Edinburgh or than Annan, such a person bethought him, naturally, of Edward Irving and his hospitable house. The great people who sought the great preacher never interfered with the smaller people who sought his assistance and his friendship; and those who had no possible claim upon his hospitality got at least his good offices and kind words.

In the middle of the summer, just two years, as he him-

self tells us, from the time of his coming, the foundation-stone of his new church was laid. It was planned of a size conformable to the reputation of the preacher. This event was celebrated by Irving in three sermons—one preached before, another after, and the third on occasion of the ceremony—in which last he takes pains to describe the discipline and practice of that Church of Scotland which stood always highest in his affections; but, at the same time, speaks of the building about to be erected in terms more like those that might be used by a Jew in reference to his temple, or by a Catholic of his holy shrine, than by Presbyterian lips, which acknowledge no consecration of place. Doubtless the sublimation which everything encountered in his mind, the faculty he had of raising all emotions into the highest regions, and of covering even the common with an ideal aspect unknown to itself, may have raised the expressions of a simple sentiment of reverence into this consecrating halo which his words threw around the unbuilt church; but it must not be forgotten that from his very outset a certain priestly instinct was in the man who bade "Peace be to this house" in every dwelling he entered, and who gave his benediction, as well as his prayers, like a primitive Pope or Bishop, as, indeed, he felt himself to be.

For rest and recreation the little family, leaving London in September, paid a short visit to the paternal houses in Scotland, and then returned to Dover, where they remained for some weeks, and where Irving, never idle, entered fully, as he himself relates, into the missionary oration of which we have already spoken. At a later period, after having again entered into harness, in the November of the same year he visited Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool by invitation, in order to stir up his countrymen there to the support and revival of the Church of their fathers, for want of which many of them had sunk into indifference, or worse.

It is naturally to his wife that his letters are now chiefly addressed, and the result is, as will be shortly shown, as wonderful a revelation of heart and thoughts as one human creature ever made to another. By this time the natural course of events seems to have withdrawn him in a great degree from regular correspondence with his friends in Scotland—a change which his marriage, and all the revolutions which had taken place in his life, as well as the full occupation of his time, and the perpetually increasing calls made upon it, rendered inevitable. His affections were unchanged, but it was no longer possible to keep up the expression of them.

The new friends who multiplied around him were of a kind to make a deep impression upon a mind which was influenced more or less by all whom it held in high regard. In dedicating a volume of sermons to Mr Basil Montagu and his wife, he addresses them with the warmest expressions of esteem and affection. To Coleridge he had also owned his still higher obligations. Another friend, whom his friends consider to have had no small influence on Irving, was the Rev. W. Vaughan, of Leicester, an English clergyman, who is supposed, I cannot say with what truth, to have been mainly instrumental in leading him to some views which he afterwards expressed. His distinguished countryman, Carlyle, whom, in one of his letters, he playfully refers to as "the moralist," not then resident in London, was his occasional guest and close friend. Good David Wilkie, and his biographer, Allan Cunningham, were of the less elevated home society, which again connected itself with the lowest homely levels by visitors and petitioners from Glasgow and Annandale. In this wide circle the preacher moved with all the joyousness of his nature, never, however, leaving it possible for any man to forget that his special character was that of a servant of God. The light talk then indulged in by magazines, breaks involuntarily into pathos and seriousness, in the allusions made in *Fraser's Magazine*, years after, to this early summer of his career. The laughing philosophers, over their wine, grow suddenly grave as they speak of the one among them who was not as other men. "In God he lived, and moved, and had his being," says this witness, impressed from among the lighter regions of life and literature to bear testimony; "no act was done but in prayer; every blessing was received with thanksgiving to God; every friend was dismissed with a parting benediction." The man who could thus make his character apparent to the wits of his day must have lived a life unequivocal and not to be mistaken.

It was while living in the full exercise of all those charities, happy in the new household and the firstborn child, that he worked at the missionary oration, the history of which I have already told. Apart from the ordinary comments upon and wonderings over the stream of fashion which still flowed towards Hatton Garden, this oration was, for that year, the only visible disturbing element in his life.

CHAPTER X.

1825.

In the beginning of the year 1825,—a year for ever to be remembered in Edward Irving's life, and which, indeed, so touching, and solemn, and pathetic are all the records of its later part, I could almost wish contained no common events, but only the apotheosis of love and grief accomplished in it,—he was, notwithstanding the sad failure and discomfiture of the London Missionary Society in its employment of his services, requested to preach for the Continental Society on a similar occasion. This Society was held up and maintained from its commencement by the nervous strength of Henry Drummond, a man already known to the preacher, over whose later course he was to exercise so great an influence. Irving, remembering the past, was slow to undertake this new commission, becoming aware, I do not doubt, that his thoughts often ran in channels so distinct from those of other men, that it was dangerous to be chosen as the mouthpiece of a large and varied body. He consented at last, however; and, true to his unfailing conscientious desire to bring out of the depths of Scripture all the light which he could perceive it to throw upon the subject in hand, his discourse naturally came to be upon prophecy. I say naturally, because, in the evangelization of the Continent, all the mystic impersonations of the Apocalypse,—the scarlet woman on her seven hills, the ten-horned beast, all the prophetic personages of that dread undeveloped drama,—are necessarily involved. The manner in which Irving's attention had been, some short time before, specially directed to the study of prophecy, is however too interesting and characteristic to be passed without more particular notice. Several years before, Mr Hatley Frere, one of the most sedulous of those prophetical students who were beginning to make themselves known here and there over the country, had propounded a new scheme of interpretation, for which, up to this time, he had been unable to secure the ear of the religious public. Not less confident in the truth of his scheme that nobody shared his belief in it, Mr Frere cherished the conviction that if he could but meet some man of candid and open mind, of popularity sufficient to gain a hearing, to whom he could privately explain and open up his system, its success was certain. When

Irving, all ingenuous and ready to be taught, was suddenly brought into contact with him, the student of prophecy identified him by an instant intuition.—"Here is the man!" he exclaimed to himself; and with all the eagerness of a discoverer, who seeks a voice by which to utter what he has found out, he addressed himself to the task of convincing the candid and generous soul which could condemn nothing unheard. He disclosed to his patient hearer all those details to which the public ear declined to listen; and the result was that Mr Frere gained a disciple and expositor; and that an influence fatal to his future leisure, and of the most momentous importance to his future destiny—which, indeed, it is impossible now to disjoin from the man, or to consider his life or character apart from—took possession of Irving's thoughts. This new subject naturally connected itself with that conviction of an approaching crisis in the fate of the world, not mild conversion, but tragic and solemn winding up and settlement, which he is said to have derived from Coleridge. Henceforward the gorgeous and cloudy vistas of the Apocalypse became a legible chart of the future to his fervent eyes.

The fascination of that study, always so engrossing and attractive, seized upon him fully; and when it came to be his business to consider the truths best adapted for the instruction and encouragement of a body of Christian men labouring on behalf of that old Roman world which has long been the heart and centre of the earth, his mind passed at once into those solemn and mysterious adumbrations of Providence in which he and many other Christian men have believed themselves able to trace the very spot, between what was fulfilled and what was unfulfilled, in which they themselves stood. Could such a standing ground be certainly obtained, who can doubt that here is indeed the guidance of all others for any effort of evangelization? Irving had no doubt upon the subject. To him the record was distinct, the past apparent, the future to be reverently but clearly understood. Superficial pious addresses were impossible to a man who went into everything with his whole heart and soul. His Bible was not to him the foundation from which theology was to be proved, but a Divine word, instinct with meaning never to be exhausted, and from which light and guidance—not vague, but particular—could be brought for every need. And the weight of his "calling" to instruct was never absent from his mind. To the missionaries, accordingly, he brought forth the picture of an apostle; and opened before

the eyes of those who aimed at a re-evangelization of old Christendom a cloudy but splendid panorama of the fate which was about to overtake the sphere of their operations, and all the mysterious agencies, half discerned in actual presence, and clearly indicated in Scripture, which were before them in that difficult and momentous field In a man distinguished as an orator this tendency to avoid the superficial and go to the very heart, as he understood it, of his subject, was neither expected nor recognized by the ordinary crowd. In this same spring of 1825, in which he preached his prophetical discourse for the instruction of a society engaged upon the Continent—on the very ground where prophecy, according to his interpretation, was to be fulfilled—he also preached for the Highland School Society; a subject which might have been supposed very congenial to his heart, and in which I have no doubt his audience looked for such glowing pictures of Highland glens and mountains, of primitive faith and picturesque godliness, the romance of religion, as pious orators, glad of so fluent a topic of declamation, have made customary on such occasions. The orator took no such easy and beaten track. He entered into the subject of education with all the conscientiousness of his nature, setting it forth fully in a manner which, whatever may be the inevitable expediencies to which modern civilization is driven, must command the respect and admiration of everybody who has ever thought upon the subject.

His discourse to the Continental Society, though it did not raise such a commotion as the missionary oration, was still far from palatable to some of his hearers. "Several of the leading members of the committee," we are told, "had neither Christian patience nor decorum enough to hear the preacher out, but abruptly left the place;" and, from the comments that followed, Irving was soon brought to understand that he had been misapprehended, and that political meanings, of which he was innocent, had been suspected in his sermon. Catholic Emancipation was then one of the questions of the day; and the advocates of both sides suspected him, oddly enough, of having supported their several views of the matter. At the same time, his heart had gone into the task; he had found in prophetical interpretation a study which charmed him deeply, and had felt himself drawn, as was natural, into a closer, exclusive fellowship with those who pursued the same study and adopted the same views. Urged by his brother-students of prophecy, and inclined of himself to give forth those investigations in which he had

himself been comforted, to the world, he devoted his leisure during the year to amplifying and filling out the germ which had been in his discourse. "Thus it came to pass," he says in the preface, "that to clear myself from being a political partisan in a ministerial garb, and to gratify the desires of these servants of Christ, I set forth this publication on which I pray the blessing of God to rest."

He entitled the book, *Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed* and dedicated it with his ususal magnanimous acknowledgment of indebtedness, to the gentleman who had first directed his thoughts to the subject.

"To my beloved friend and brother in Christ, Hatley Frere, Esq.

"When I first met you, worthy sir, in a company of friends, and moved, I know not by what, asked you to walk forth into the fields that we might commune together, while the rest enjoyed their social converse, you seemed to me as one who dreamed, while you opened in my ear your views of the present time, as foretold in the Book of Daniel and the Apocalypse. But being ashamed of my own ignorance, and having been blessed from my youth with the desire of instruction, I dared not to scoff at what I heard, but resolved to consider the matter. More than a year passed before it pleased Providence to bring us together again, at the house of the same dear friend and brother in the Lord, when you answered so sweetly and temperately the objections made to your views, that I was more and more struck with the outward tokens of a believer in truth; and I was again ashamed at my own ignorance, and again resolved to consider the matter; after which I had no rest in my spirit until I waited upon you and offered myself as your pupil, to be instructed in prophecy according to your ideas thereof; and for the ready good-will with which you undertook, and the patience with which you performed this kind office, I am for ever beholden to you, most dear and worthy friend. . . . For I am not willing that any one should account of me as if I were worthy to have had revealed to me the important truths contained in this discourse, which may all be found written in your 'Treatise on the Prophecies of Daniel;' only the Lord accounted me worthy to receive the faith of these things which He first made known to you, His more worthy servant. And if He make me the instrument of conveying that faith to any of His Church, that they may make themselves ready for His coming, or to any of the world, that they may take refuge in the ark of His salvation from the deluge of wrath which abideth the impenitent, to His name shall all the praise and glory be ascribed by me, His unworthy servant, who, through mercy, dareth to subscribe himself, your brother in the bond of the Spirit, and the desire of the Lord's coming,

"Edward Irving."

Of a very different character is the next incident which we find in this history. An account of "an afternoon spent in his society among the poor of London," which appeared

some years since in the pages of the *Free Church Magazine*, gives a quaint picture at once of the disabilities and mistakes of ordinary visitors of the poor, and of Irving's entire capacity for that noble and difficult office. Some ladies in the city had established an infant school in the district of Billingsgate, and finding themselves quite unsuccessful in persuading the people to send their children to it, applied to Irving to help them. He, at the height of his splendid reputation, whom critics had assailed with accusations of indifference to the poor, immediately consented to give his aid in this humble mission. He went with them, accordingly, through the district. In the first house he left the explanation of their errand to his female clients, and speedily discovered the mistake these good people made. The scene is full of comic elements, and one can scarcely refrain from imagining the appearance that such a group must have presented: the city ladies, important in their mission, impressing upon the hesitating, half-affronted mother, into whose room they had made their way, all the charitable advantages which they had ordained for her children,—and the great figure of the preacher standing by, letting them have their own way, doubtless not without amusement in his compassionate eyes. When they came to the second house, he took the office of spokesman upon himself. "When the door was opened, he spoke in the kindest tone to the woman who opened it, and asked permission to go in. He then explained the intention of the ladies, asked how many children she had, and whether she would send them? A ready consent was the result; and the mother's heart was completely won when the visitor took one of her little ones on his knee, and blessed her." The city ladies were confounded. They had honestly intended to benefit the poor, very, very distantly related to them by way of Adam and the forgotten patriarchs—but the cheerful brotherhood of the man who had blessed the bread of the starving Glasgow weavers was as strange to them as if he had spoken Hebrew instead of English. "Why, Mr Irving," exclaimed one of the ladies when they got into the street, "you spoke to that woman as if she were doing *you* a favour, and not you conferring one on *her!* How could you speak so? and how could you take up that child on your knee?" "The woman," he replied, "does not as yet know the advantages which her children will derive from your school; by-and-by she will know them, and own her obligations to you; and in so speaking and in blessing her child, I do but follow the example of our Lord, who blessed the little ones, the lambs of

His flock." In another house the children had beautiful hair, which the benevolent visitors, intent on doing good after their own fashion, insisted on having cut short as a preliminary of admission. The great preacher lifted the pretty curls in his hand and pleaded for them, but in vain. When they were denied admission at one house, he left his benediction to the unseen people within, and passed on. On the whole, his companions did not know what to make of him. Irving's fashion of visiting "the poor" was unknown in Billingsgate.

A word or two as to the most modest and primitive life led by the subject of our memoir will not be out of place here. I give it on the authority of one of his nearest relatives, a lady, who frequently lived in his house. "Mr Irving's rule was to see any of his friends who wished to visit him without ceremony at breakfast. Eight o'clock was the hour. Family worship first, and then breakfast. At ten he rose, bade every one good-bye, and retired to his study. He gave no audience again till after three. Two o'clock was the dinner hour; and, after that, should no one come to prevent him, he generally walked out, Mrs Irving accompanying him; and, until the baby took hooping-cough, Mr Irving almost always carried him in his arms. Some people laughed at this, but that he did not care for in the very least." To see the great preacher admired and flattered by the highest personages in the kingdom, marching along the Pentonville streets with his baby, must have been a spectacle to make ordinary men open their eyes. An amusing personal anecdote, belonging to a similar period, comes from the same authority. His indifference to money has been visible with sufficient distinctness throughout his life; but, after his marriage, according to a primitive habit most worthy of imitation, he committed the charge of his finances entirely to the prudence of his wife, and carried sometimes only the smallest of coins, sometimes nothing at all, in his own private purse. This habit sometimes brought him into situations of amusing embarrassment. On one occasion he had left home to visit a member of his congregation somewhere on the line of the New Road; but, finding himself late, took, without considering the state of his pocket, the Paddington *coach*, omnibuses having not yet come into fashion. As soon as the vehicle was on its way, the unlucky passenger recollected that he was penniless. His dismay at the thought was overwhelming, but soon brightened with a sudden inspiration. Looking around him, he artfully fixed upon the most benevolent looking face he saw, and poured his sorrows into his fellow-travel-

ler's ear. "I told him that I was a clergyman," was the account he gave to his amused home audience; "that, since I had obtained a wife from the Lord, I had given up all concern with the things of this world, leaving my purse in my wife's hands; and that to-day I had set out to visit some of my flock at a distance, without recollecting to put a shilling in my purse for the coach." The good man thus addressed was propitious, and paid the fare. But the honour due to such a good Samaritan is lessened when we learn that the preacher's remarkable appearance, and scarcely less extraordinary request, betrayed him; and the stranger had the honour and satisfaction, for his sixpence, of making the acquaintance of Edward Irving.

Early in this summer, clouds began to appear in the firmament of the new household. The baby, so joyfully welcomed and dearly prized, was seized with hooping-cough. And, in the end of June, Mrs Irving, then herself in a delicate condition of health, accompanied by her sister, took little Edward down to Scotland, to the peaceful manse of Kirkcaldy, for change of air. The following letter was written immediately after the departure of the travellers:—

"London, Friday Afternoon; July 1st, 1825.

"My dear Isabella and beloved wife, I suppose, by the time this arrives in Kirkcaldy, you will be arrived, and little Edward, and our dear brother and sister, and faithful Mary; and, because I cannot be there to welcome you in person to your father's house, I send this my representative to take you by the hand, to embrace you by the heart, and say welcome, thrice welcome, to your home and your country, which you have honoured by fulfilling the duties of a wife and mother well and faithfully—the noblest duties of womanhood. And while I say this to yourself, I take you to your father and mother, and say unto them: Receive, honoured parents, your daughter—your eldest-born child—and give her double honour as one who hath been faithful and dutiful to her husband, and brings with her a child to bear down your piety, and faith, and blessedness to other generations, if it please the Lord. Thus I fulfil the duty of restoring with honour and credit—well due and well won—one whom I received from their house as its best gift to me.

"When I returned, I went solitary to Mrs Montagu's, who was pleased with your letter, in order to see whether I was expected at Highgate. . . . So to Highgate B—— and I hied, and we found the sage,* as usual, full of matter. He talked with me privately about his own spiritual concerns, and I trust he is in the way of salvation, although I see that he has much to prevail against, as we have all. . . I have pastoral work for all next week but Thursday, and shall con-

* Coleridge, then living at Highgate with his friends, the Gillmans.

tinue so until I remove. To-day I have been busy with my first discourse upon the 'Will of the Father,' which I pray you to study diligently in the Gospel by John i. 13, 14; v. 20, 21; vii. 37, 44, 65; viii. 16, 19, 26, 28; x. 27, 29—and all those discourses study, if you would know the precedency which the will of the Father hath of the preaching of the Son, and how much constant honour you must give to it, in order to be a disciple of Christ. My head is wearied, and with difficulty directeth my hand to write these few words, which I am moved to by my affection to you as my wife, and my desire after you as a saint. Therefore, I conclude hastily, with my love to our dear parents, brothers, and sisters, and all our kindred. The Lord preserve my wife and child!

"Your faithful husband,
"EDWARD IRVING."

It appears from the letters of this period that Irving had already found his way to those views of baptism which he did not publish to the world till some time after. The instincts of fatherhood had quickened his mind in his investigations. He had found it impossible, when his thoughts were directed to this subject, to rest in the vagueness of ordinary conceptions. "We assuredly believe that by baptism we are ingrafted in Christ Jesus," says simply that ancient, primitive confession to which his heart turned as the clearest, simple utterance, uncontroversial and single-minded, of the national faith. When Irving turned towards that question, he "assuredly believed" the canon he had subscribed at his ordination; and receiving it with no lukewarm and indifferent belief, but with a faith intense and real, came to regard the ordinance in so much warmer and clearer a light than is usual in his Church, that his sentiments seem to have differed from those of the High Church party of England, who hold baptismal regeneration, by the merest hair's-breadth of distinction—a distinction which indeed I confess myself unable to appreciate. This intensified and brightened apprehension, which made the ordinance not a sign only, nor a vaguely mysterious conjunction of sign and reality, but an actual, effectual sacrament, rejoiced the new-made father to the bottom of his heart. His soul expanded in a deeper tenderness over the chrisom child, whom he "assuredly believed" to be "ingrafted in Christ Jesus." Years afterwards, he makes a touching acknowledgment of gratitude for this insight—given, as in the fervour and simplicity of his heart he believed it to be, as a strengthening preparation against the sharpest personal anguish of life.

In the months of July and August he remained alone in London, living in the house of his friends Mr and Mrs Mon-

tagu, and proceeding vigorously, as has been seen, in his labours—with no serious fears respecting the boy who was so dear to his heart, of whom he had received comforting news. In the beginning of September he went to Scotland to join his wife, who was then in expectation of the birth of her second child. But, with the cold autumn winds, trouble and fear came upon the anxious household. The baby, Edward, had rallied so much as to make them forget their former fears on his account; but it was only a temporary relief. On the second day of October, a daughter was born; and for ten days longer, in another room of the house, separated from the poor mother, who for her other baby's sake was not permitted ever again, in life, to behold her first-born, little Edward lingered out the troubled moments, and died slowly in his father's agonized sight. The new-born infant was baptized on Sunday, the 9th October, for a consolation to their hearts; and on the 11th her brother died. Dr Martin, of Kirkcaldy, writing to his father—the venerable old man who had baptized little Edward, his descendant of the fourth generation—describes with tears in his voice, how, sitting beside the little body, he could do nothing but kneel down and weep, till reminded of the words used by the child's father "in a sense in which, probably, they have not often been applied, but the force of which, at the moment, was very striking, when he saw all about him dissolved in tears, on viewing the dear infant's cruel struggle, 'Look not at the things which are seen, but at those which are unseen!'"——"Edward and Isabella," he continues, "both bear the stroke, though sore, with wonderful resignation. . . . . Two nights ago they resolved, in their conference and prayers concerning him, to surrender him wholly to God—to consider him as not their child, but God's. . . . . When her husband came down-stairs to-day, he said, in reply to a question from her mother, 'She is bearing it as well as one saint could wish to see another do.'—Blessed be the Holy Name! David will tell you that the little Margaret was received into the Church visible on Sabbath afternoon. . . . I should have said, that when assembled to worship as a family, after all was over, Mr Irving, before I began to pray, requested leave to address us; and he addressed us, all and several, in the most affectionate and impressive manner. The Lord bless and fix his words! In testimony of his gratitude for the consolation afforded him and his wife, he has gone out to visit and comfort some of the afflicted around us."

The manner in which Irving himself announced this first

interruption of his family happiness, with an elevation and ecstasy of grief which I do not doubt will go to the hearts of all who have suffered similar anguish, as indeed the writer can scarcely transcribe it without tears, will be seen by the following letter, addressed to William Hamilton, and written on the day of death itself:—

"Kirkcaldy, 11th October, 1825.

"OUR DEARLY-BELOVED FRIEND, The hand of the Lord hath touched my wife and me, and taken from us our well-beloved child, sweet Edward, who was dear to you also, as he was to all who knew him. But before taking him, He gave unto us good comfort of the Holy Ghost, as He doth to all His faithful servants; and we are comforted, verily we are comforted. Let the Lord be praised, who hath visited the lowly, and raised them up!

"If you had been here yesterday and this day when our little babe was taken, you would have seen the stroke of death subdued by faith, and the strength of the grave overcome; for the Lord hath made His grace to be known unto us in the inward part. I feel that the Lord hath well done in that He hath afflicted me, and that by His grace I shall be a more faithful minister unto you, and unto all the flock committed to my charge. Now is my heart broken—now is its hardness melted; and my pride is humbled, and my strength is renewed. The good name of the Lord be praised!

"Our little Edward, dear friend, is gone the way of all the earth; and his mother and I are sustained by the Prince and Saviour who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light. The affection which you bear to us, or did bear towards the dear child who is departed, we desire that you will not spend it in unavailing sorrow, but elevate it unto Him who hath sustained our souls, even the Lord our Saviour Jesus Christ; and if you feel grief and trouble, oh, turn the edge of it against sin and Satan to destroy their works, for it is they who have made us to drink of this bitter cup.

"Communicate this to all our friends in the congregation and church, as much as may be, by the perusal of this letter, that they may know the grace of God manifested unto us; and oh, William Hamilton, remember thyself, and tell them all that they are dust, and that their children are as the flowers of the field.

"Nevertheless, God granting me a safe journey, I will preach at the Caledonian church on Sabbath, the 23rd, though I am cut off from my purpose of visiting the churches by the way. The Lord be with you, and your brethren of the eldership, and all the church and congregation.

"Your affectionate friend,

"EDWARD IRVING.

"My wife joining with me."

With such an ode and outburst of the highest strain of grief, brought so close to the gates of heaven, that the dazzled mourner, overpowered with the greatness of the anguish and

the glory, sees the Lord within, and takes a comfort more pathetic than any lamentation, was the child Edward buried. He was but fifteen months old; but either from his natural loveliness, or from the subliming influence of his father's love and grief, seems to have left a memory behind him as of the very ideal and flower of infancy. By his father and mother the child was always held in pathetically thankful remembrance. "Little Edward, their fairest and their first," writes one of Mrs Irving's sisters, "never lost his place in their affections. Writing of one of her little ones, some years afterwards, my sister said, 'I have said all to you when I tell you that we think her very like our little Edward;'" and the same lady tells us of Irving's answer to somebody who expressed the superficial and common wonder, so often heard, that helpless babies should grow up to be the leaders and guides of the world, in words similar to those which break from him in his Preface to *Ben-Ezra:* "Whoso studieth as I have done, and reflecteth as I have sought to reflect, upon the first twelve months of a child; whoso hath had such a child to look and reflect upon, as the Lord for fifteen months did bless me withal (whom I would not recall, if a wish could recall him, from the enjoyment and service of our dear Lord), will rather marvel how the growth of that wonderful creature, which put forth such a glorious bud of being, should come to be so cloaked by the flesh, cramped by the world, and cut short by Satan, as not to become a winged seraph; will rather wonder that such a puny, heartless, feeble thing as manhood should be the abortive fruit of the rich bud of childhood, than think that childhood is an imperfect promise and opening of the future man. And therefore it is that I grudged not our noble, lovely child, but rather do delight that such a seed should blossom and bear in the kindly and kindred paradise of my God. And why should not I speak of thee, my Edward! seeing it was in the season of thy sickness and death the Lord did reveal in me the knowledge and hope and desire of His Son from heaven? Glorious exchange! He took my son to His own more fatherly bosom, and revealed in my bosom the sure expectation and faith of His own eternal Son: Dear season of my life, ever to be remembered, when I knew the sweetness and fruitfulness of such joy and sorrow."

I cannot doubt that the record of this infant's death, and the traces it leaves upon the life and words of his sorrowful but rejoicing father, will endear the great orator to many sorrowful hearts. So far as I can perceive, no other event

of his life penetrated so profoundly the depths of his spirit. And I cannot think it is irreverent to lift the veil, now that both of those most concerned have rejoined their children, from that sanctuary of human sorrow, faith, and patience. Those of us who know such days of darkness may take some courage from the sight. And such of my readers as may have become interested in the domestic portions of this history will be pleased to hear that the little daughter, born under such lamentable circumstances, lived to grow up into a beautiful and gifted woman, brightened her father's house during all his life-time, and died—happily not long before her much-tried and patient mother.

Irving remained in Kirkcaldy about a week after this sad event; during which time he occupied himself, "in gratitude for the comfort he had himself received," as it is pathetically said, in visiting all who were sorrowful in his father-in-law's congregation. Then, leaving his wife to perfect her slow and sad recovery in her father's house, until she and the new-born infant, now doubly precious, were fit to travel, he went away sadly by himself, to seek comfort and strength in a solitary journey on foot—an apostolical journey, in which he carried his Master's message from house to house, along the way—to his father's house in Annan. Mrs Irving and her child remained for some time in Scotland; and to this circumstance we owe a closer and more faithful picture of Irving's life and heart than anything which a biographer could attempt; than anything, indeed, which, so far as I am aware, any man of modern days has left behind him.

CHAPTER XI.

JOURNAL.

The correspondence which follows needs neither introduction nor comment. No one who reads it will need to be told how remarkable it is. It was Irving's first long separation from his wife, and his heart was opened and warmed by that touch of mutual sorrow which gives a more exquisite closeness to all love. This perfect revelation of a man's heart and of a husband's trust and confidence, is given by permission of the remaining children of his house. It will be seen

to begin from the time of his leaving Kirkcaldy, after the sorrows above recorded.

"Annan, 18th October, 1825.

"My dearest Wife,—I am grieved that I should have missed this day's post, by the awkwardness of the hour of making up the bag at noon precisely, beyond which I was carried, before I knew that it was past, by the many spiritual duties to which I felt called in my father's house and my sister's. . . . But I know my dear Isabella will not grieve half so much on this account as I have done myself. . . . And now, having parted with all the household, I sit down here, at the solemn hour of midnight, to write you how it is with me, and has been since I left you, first praying that this may find you and our dear babe as I left you, increased in strength.

"Andrew bore me company to Peebles, and will inform you of my journey so far. We parted at two o'clock on the south side of Peebles Bridge, and I took my solitary way up Glen Sark, calling at every shepherd's house along my route, to obtain an opportunity of admonishing mother and children of their mortality, and so proceeded till I set my face to climb the hill which you must pass to get out of the glen. In ascending which, I had the sight and feeling of a new phenomenon among the mountains, a terrible hail-storm, which swept down the side of the opposite mountain, and came upon me with such a violence as required all my force of hand and foot to keep erect, obliterating my meagre path, and leaving me in the wildest mountain, wholly at a nonplus, to steer my way; until the sun breaking out, or rather streaking the west with a bright light, I found myself holding right east instead of south, and night threatening to be upon me before I could clear the unknown wild. . I was lonely enough; but, committing my way unto the Lord, I held south as nearly as I could guess, and reached the solitary house in the head of another water, of which Sam may recollect something; where, for gathering with a shepherd, I got directions, and set my breast against Black-house heights, and reached my old haunts on Douglas Burn, where, in answer to the apostolic benediction which I carried everywhere, I received a kindly offer of tea, night's lodging, then a horse to carry me through the wet, all of which in my haste refusing, I took my way over the rough grounds which lie between that and Dryhope by Loch St Mary. My adventures here with the Inverness-shire herds and the dogs of Dryhope Tower (a perfect colony, threatening to devour me with open mouth), I cannot go into, and leave it to the discourse of the lip. Here I waded the Yarrow at the foot of the loch, under the crescent moon, where, finding a convenient rock beneath some overhanging branches which moaned and sighed in the breeze, I sat me down, while the wind, sweeping, brought the waters of the loch to my feet; and I paid my devotions to the Lord in his own ample and magnificent temple; and sweet meditations were afforded me of thee, our babe, and our departed boy. My soul was filled with sweetness. 'I did not ask for a sign,' as Colonel Blackadder says; but when I looked up to the moon, as I came out from the ecclesia of the rock, she looked as never a moon had looked before in my eye,—as if she had been washed in dew, which, speedily clearing

off, she looked so bright and beautiful; and on the summit of the opposite hill a little bright star gleamed upon me, like the bright, bright eye of our darling. Oh, how I wished you had been with me to partake the sweet solacement of that moment! Of my adventure with the shepherd-boy Andrew, whose mother's sons were all squandered abroad among the shepherds, and our prayer upon the edge of the mountain, and my welcome at the cottage, and cold reception at the farm-house, I must also be silent, till the living pen shall declare them unto you. Only, I had trial of an apostolic day and night, and slept sweetly, after blessing my wife and child. Next day I passed over to the grave of Boston, at Ettrick, where I ministered in the manse to the minister's household, and tracked my way up into Eskdale, where, after conversing with the martyr's tomb (Andrew Hyslop's), I reached the Ware about half an hour after George, who had brought a gig up to Grange, and from that place had crossed the moor to meet me; and by returning upon his steps, we reached home about eleven o'clock. But such weather! I was soaked, the case of my desk was utterly dissolved, and the mechanical ingenuity of Annan is now employed constructing another. But I am well, very well; and for the first time have made proof of an apostolical journey, and found it to be very, very sweet and profitable. Whether I have left any seed that will grow, the Lord only knows.

"Many, many are the tender and loving sympathies towards you which are here expressed, and many the anxious wishes for your welfare and hope of seeing you, when, without danger, you can undertake it. . . . . I shall never forget, and never repay, the tender attentions of all your dear father's household to me and mine. The Lord remember them with the love He beareth to His own. I affectionately, most affectionately salute them all. . . . . The Lord comfort and foster your spirit. The Lord enrich our darling, and make her a Mary to us. . . .

"Your most affectionate husband,

"Edward Irving."

"Carlisle, 21st October, 1825.

"My dear Isabella,—Thus far I am arrived safely, and find that my seat is taken out in the London mail to-morrow evening at seven o'clock. I left all my father's family in good health, full of affection to me, and, I trust, not without faith and love towards God. Mr Fergusson and Margaret and the two eldest boys came down from Dumfries on Wednesday, and added much to our domestic enjoyment, which, but for the pain of parting so soon, was as complete as ever I had felt it; for, though my heart was very cold, I persevered, by the force, I fear, rather of strong resolution than of spiritual affection, to set before them their duties to God and to the souls of their children. They spoke all very tenderly of you, and feel much for your weal, and long for the time when they shall be able to comfort you in person. Thomas Carlyle came down to-day, and edified me very much with his discourse. Dr Duncan came down with C—— M——, who, poor lad, seems fast hastening into one of the worst forms of Satanic pride. He desires solitude, he says, and hates men.

"Your short pencilled note was like honey to my soul; and though I have not had the outpouring of soul for you, little baby, and myself which I desire, I hope the Lord will enable me this night to utter my spiritual affections before His throne. I am an unworthy man—a poor miserable servant,—unworthy to be a doorkeeper; how unworthy to be a minister at the altar of His house! I shall write you when I reach London. Till then may the Lord be your defence, my dear lamb's nourishment and strength, Mary's encouragement, and the sustenance of your unworthy head. Rest you, my dear, and be untroubled till the Lord restore your health; then cease not to meditate upon, and to seek the improvement of our great trial, which may I never forget, and as oft as I remember, exercise an act of submission unto the will of God. This is written at the fire of the public room among my fellow-travellers. The Laird of Dornoch, Tristram Lowther the wilful, where I waited for the coach, expressed a great desire that, when you came to the country, you would visit him. . . . . .

"Your true and faithful husband,

"Edward Irving.

"Myddleton Terrace, 25th October, 1825.

"My dear Wife, beloved in the Lord,—I bless you and our little child, and pray that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with you and all the house.

"I reached London late [eleven o'clock] on Saturday night, by the good preservation of God,—to which, when I sought at times to turn the minds of my fellow-travellers, I seemed unto them as one that mocked: but though we were a graceless company, we were preserved by the Lord. On our journey there occurred nothing remarkable except one thing, which, for its singular hospitality, I resolved to recount to you. Our road lay through Rutlandshire, and half way between Uppingham and Kettering, there appeared before us, on the top of a hill, an ancient building, but not like any castle which I had ever seen before,—being low and irregular, and covering a deal of ground, and built, you would say, more for hospitality and entertainment than strength. I make no doubt, from the form of the structure, it is as old as the Saxon times, and belonged to one of those franklins of whom Walter Scott speaks in 'Ivanhoe.' . . . . . Now mark, when our road, swinging up the hill, came to the gate of this mansion, which was a simple gate,—not a hold, or any imitation of a hold, of strength,—to my astonishment, the guard of the mail descended and opened the gate, and in we drove to the park and gate of the castle, where they were cutting wood into billets, which were lying in heaps, for the sake of the poor in the village beneath the hill. One of these billets they laid in the wheel of the coach, for the hill is very steep; and while I meditated what all this might mean, thinking it was some service they were going to do for the family, out came from a door of the castle a very kindly-looking man, bearing in a basket bread and cheese, and in his hand a pitcher full of ale, of which he kindly invited us all to partake, and of which we all partook most heartily, for it was now past noon, and we had travelled far since breakfast—from Nottingham. . . . So here I paid my last farewell to ale, and am now a Nazarite to the sense. Oh that

the Lord would make me a Nazarite indeed from all lusts of the flesh! . . . . . Remember this hospitable lord in your prayers. He is my Lord Sondes, and his place is Rockingham Castle. The Mail-coach hath this privilege from him at all times, and I understand, during the great fall of snow, he took the passengers in, and entertained them for several days, until they were able to get forward.

"I arrived, I say, at eleven o'clock, and Alexander Hamilton was waiting for me at the Angel, with whom I walked to this house of mourning, and found Hall getting better, and all things prepared by his worthy wife for my comfort. So here I am resolved to abide, and meditate my present trials and widowhood for a time. But I forget not, morning and evening, to bless you, and our dear little lamb, and Mary, our faithful servant, and to sue for blessings to you all from the Lord; and truly I feel very lonely to ascend those stairs, and lie down upon my lonely bed. But the Lord filled me with some strong consolations when I thought that a spirit calling me father, and thee mother, might now be ministering at His throne. I do not remember ever being so uplifted in soul. Yesterday I travailed much in spirit for the people, and preached to them with a full heart; that is, compared with myself; but measured by the rule of Christian love, how poor, how cold, how sinful! This morning I have had the younger Sottomayor* with me. Would you cause inquiries to be made what likelihood there is of his succeeding as a Spanish teacher in Edinburgh? . . . . . Before setting out, I resolved to write you, however briefly, that your heart might be comforted; for are not you my chief comfort? and ought not I to be yours, according to my ability? I assure you, all the people were glad to see me back again, and condoled with us with a great grief. The Lord bless them with all consolations in their day of affliction. The church was as usual very crowded, and I had much liberty of utterance granted me of the Lord. . . . . I desire my love to your dear father and mother, and my most dutiful obedience as a son of their house. My brotherly affection to all your sisters, who were parents to our Edward; and to our brothers, who loved him as their own bowels. Oh, forget not any of you the softening chastisement of the Lord. Walk in His fear, and let your hearts be comforted.

"Your most affectionate husband and pastor of your soul,

"EDWARD IRVING."

"Say to Mary: 'Pray for the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father.'"

* This was one of two brothers, Spaniards, the elder of whom had been abbot of a monastery, and had more than once been intrusted with missions to Rome. He had been enlightened by a copy of the Bible in the library of his convent, and after a while had been obliged to flee from the terrors of the Inquisition. He could speak scarcely any English, but was kindly helped to acquire it by the ladies of Mr Irving's family. The younger was a soldier, brought to Protestantism as much by love for his brother as by love for the truth. Irving exerted himself in behalf of both, and treated them with great and constant kindness. The abbé married a lady whose confessor he had been, and whom he had insensibly led into his own views, and, as a consequence, into persecution—but died early, leaving his widow to the protection of his devoted brother.

After his arrival in London, his letters take the form of a journal, commenced as follows :—

"Let me now endeavour to express, for the information of my dear wife, and for her consolation under our present sore trial, and for the entertainment of her present separation from me, and the gratification of all her spousal affections, and, by the grace of God, for the building up of her faith in Christ, and her love towards her husband, whatever hath occurred to the experience of my soul this day, and whatever hath occupied my thoughts in this my study, and whatever hath engaged my activity out of doors; and for her sake may the Lord grant me a faithful memory and a true utterance.

"*26th.*—This morning I arose a little after seven o'clock, in possession of my reason and of my health, and not without aspirations of soul towards the communion of God; but poor and heartless when compared with those experiences of the Psalmist, whose prayers prevented the dawning of the morning, and his meditations the night-watches; and my soul being afflicted with the downwardness, and wandering of spirit, and coldness of heart, towards the God of my salvation, in the morning, which is as it were a new resurrection, it was borne in upon my mind that it arose in a great measure from my not realizing with abiding constancy the Mediator between me and God, but breaking through, as it were, to commune with Him in mine own strength—whereby the lightning did scathe my soul, or rather my soul abode in its barrenness, unwatered from the living fountain, in its slavery unredeemed by the Captain of my salvation, who will be acknowledged before He will bless us, or rather who must be honoured in order that we may stand well in the sight of the Father. When the family were assembled to prayers in the little library (our family consists at present of Mrs Hall, her niece, a sweet young woman out of Somersetshire, and a servant maid, and Hall, who is not able to come down-stairs till after noon), Miss Dalzell* and her sister came in to consult me concerning the unsuitable behaviour of one of the Sabbath-school teachers, who was becoming a scandal unto the rest of the teachers, and had been a sore trouble to her, and whom Satan was moving to trouble the general peace of the Society. Under which affliction, having given her what present comfort the Lord enabled me, I refrained from any positive deliverance, or even hinting any idea, till the matter should come before our committee—against which may

* A lady who had been the means of establishing a system of local Sabbath schools.

the Lord grant me and all the teachers the spirit of wise counsel to meet and defeat this device of the Evil One. How the tares grow up among the wheat in every society, and, alas! in every heart! The Lord root them out of my soul, though the pain be sore as the plucking out a right eye or a right hand. After worship and breakfast I composed myself to read out of a book of old pamphlets concerning the Revolution, one which contains a minute journal of the expedition of the Prince of Orange, for the Protestant cause, into England, from the day of his setting out to the day of his coronation; which, written as it is in a spiritual and biblical style, brought more clear convictions to my mind that this passage of history is as wonderful a manifestation of God's arm as any event in the history of the Jews; being the judgment of the Stewarts, the reward of the Orange house, the liberation of the sealed nation from its idolatrous oppressors, and the beginning of the humiliation of France, which went on for a century and was consummated in the Revolution, of which the remote cause was in the expensive wars of Louis XIV., exhausting the finances, and causing Louis XVI. to be a 'raiser of taxes,' according to Daniel's prophecy. Oh, that some one would follow the history of the Christian Church and embody it in chronicles in the spirit of the books of Samuel! There is no presumption, surely, in giving a spiritual account of that which we know from the prophecies to be under spiritual administration. Afterwards I addressed myself to Bishop Overall's Convocation book, concerning the government of the Catholic Church and the kingdoms of the whole world, which digests, under short chapters, the history of God's revelation, and appends a canon to each. In the first twenty-two of which chapters and canons I was astonished to find the full declaration of what had been dawning upon my mind, viz. that the maxim which since Locke's time has been the basis of all government, 'that all power is derived from the people, and held of the people for the people's good,' is in truth the basis of all revolution and radicalism, and the dissolution of all government; and that governors and judges, of whatever name, hold their place and authority of God for ends discovered in His Word, even as people yield obedience to laws and magistrates by the same highest authority. Also it pleased me to find how late sprung is the notion among our levelling dissenters, that the magistrate hath no power in the Church, and how universal was the notion among the reformers and divines that the magistrate is bound to put down idolatry and will-worship, and

provide for the right religious instruction of the people. That subject of toleration needs to be reconsidered; the liberals have that question wholly their own way, and therefore I know that there must be error in it; for where Satan is, there is confusion and every evil work.

"I went out into the garden to walk before dinner, and with difficulty refrained my tears to think how oft and with what sweet delight I had borne my dear, dear boy along that walk, with my dear wife at my side; but had faith given me to see his immortality in another world, and rest satisfied with my Maker's will. Sir Peter Lawrie called after dinner, and besought me, as indeed have many, to go and live with him; but nothing shall tempt me from this sweet solitude of retirement, and activity of consolation, and ministry to the afflicted. . . . . When he was gone I went forth upon my outdoor ministry, and as I walked to Mr Whyte's, along the terraces overlooking those fields where we used to walk, three in one, I was sore, sore distressed, and found the temptation to 'idolatry of the memory;' which the Lord delivered me from—at the same time giving the clue to the subject which has been taking form in my mind lately, to be treated as arising out of my trial; and the form in which it presented itself is 'the idolatry of the affections,' which will embrace the whole evil, the whole remedy, and the sound condition of all relations. I proceeded to Mrs S., and, being somewhat out of spirits, was tempted of Satan to return, but having been of late much exercised upon the necessity of implicit obedience to the will of God, I hastened to proceed, and was richly rewarded in an interview with the mother and daughter, wherein my mouth was opened, as was their heart, and I trust seed was sown which will bear fruit. Then I returned home through the churchyard, full of softness of heart. . . . . Upon my return home I addressed myself to a discourse upon the text, 'To me to live is Christ, and to die gain,' until the hour of evening prayer, when I gathered my little flock, and having commended all our spirits and all our beloved ones to the Father of Mercies, we parted,—they to their couches, where I trust they now sleep in peace; I to this sweet office of affection, which I now close with the deep closing knell of St Paul's sounding twelve in my ear. My beloved Isabella, you are sleeping upon your pillow; the God of Jacob make it rich and divine as the pillow of Padanaram! My little darling, thou art resting on thy mother's bosom; the Lord make thee unto us what Isaac was to Abraham and Sarah! Farewell, my beloved!

"27*th October*.—I am so worn out with work that I fear it is a vain undertaking to which I now address myself, of giving some account of the day's transactions to my dear wife. I began the day with a sweet exercise of private devotion, wherein the Lord gave me ore than usual composure of soul; and having descended, we read together the fourth chapter of Job, and prayed earnestly that the Lord would enable us to fulfil His will; at and after breakfast I read the seventy-third Psalm in Hebrew, and in the Greek New Testament the first chapter of Hebrews. After which I went to my solitary walk in the garden, and was exercised with many thoughts which came clothed in a cloud, but passed encircled with a rainbow. As I walked I employed myself in committing to memory some Hebrew roots. Having returned to my study, I addressed myself to read two or three additional chapters and canons in the Convocation book, and am a good deal shaken concerning the right of subjects to take arms against their sovereign. Thereafter I laboured at my discourse, in the composition of which I find a new style creeping upon me, whether for the better or for the worse I know not; but this I know, that I seek more and more earnestly to be a tongue unto the Holy Spirit. My dinner being ended I returned to my readings, and sought to entertain my mind with a volume of my book of ancient voyages, which delights me with its simplicity. I had a call from Mr M——, and Dr M—— with him. I was enabled to be very faithful, and I trust with some good effect. . . . . Then I went to church to meet my young communicants, and the spiritual part of my people. But of all that passed, sweet and profitable, I am unable to write, with difficulty forming my thoughts into these feeble words. The Lord send refreshing sleep to my dear wife and little babe, and to His servant, who has the satisfaction of having wearied himself in His service. Farewell!

"28*th October, Thursday*.—This day, my best beloved, has been to me a day of activity and not of study, feeling it necessary to lie by and refresh my head, whose faintness or feebleness hindered my spirit from expressing itself last night to its beloved mate. My visions of the night were of our dearly beloved boy, whose death I thought all a mistake or falsehood, and that he was among our hands still; but this illusion was accompanied with such prayers and refreshings of soul, and all so hallowed, that I awoke out of it nowise disappointed with the sad reality; and having arisen, I addressed myself to the cleansing of body and soul, and especially besought the Lord for simple and implicit obedience to His holy

will, of which prayer, methinks, I have this day experienced the sweet and gracious answer. At family prayers and breakfast there assembled Mr Hamilton, our brother; Mr Darling, one of the flock, who came to consult concerning the schools, for which they wish a collection, to which I am the more disposed that all other means have failed; Mr Thompson, the preacher who visited us at Kirkcaldy, and came to present me with his little religious novel of *The Martyr*, a tale of the first century; *opus perdifficile;* Mr M——, curate of our parish of Clerkenwell, who came to commune with me concerning Sottomayor and the affairs of the parish, a man of zeal, but I fear not of much wisdom, yet devoted to the Lord; Mr Johnstone, a young lawyer from Alnwick, four years an inmate of Pears' house,* a Christian likewise, but of the Radical or Dissenting-for-dissenting-sake school;—I trust men of God: and a sweet thought it is to me that the Lord should encompass my table with His servants. For whose entertainment Mrs Hall (best and frugallest of housekeepers) had prepared a ham and other eatables, with which, and tea, not over strong, we were well pleased and thankful to satisfy our hunger. After breakfast we set out (which had been projected between Mr Hamilton and me) to see the walls of the new church, arising out of the earth in massive strength to more than the height of a man, where we found Mr Dinwiddie, with his daughters, of whom he would not allow one to go to Edinburgh on a visit of months without having seen it, to carry the reports of our work. This careful elder having pointed to Mr Hamilton the remissness of the overseer to be on his post betimes, we proceeded to the city; I to visit the flock, they to their honest callings. In Mr H——'s hospitium of business, and general rendezvous of Caledonian friends, I wrote for Elizabeth Dinwiddie a letter of pastoral commendation to Mrs Gordon, through whom, wife of my heart and sharer of my joys, you will find her out if you should be resident in the city. In the room of shawls, muslin, and muslin-boxes, which your father found cool as the refreshing zephyrs, there were four Greeks, negotiating with Alexander, by the universal language of the exchange, the ten digits, for one other common sign had they not. They were small, strong, well-built fellows, turbaned, with black hair curling from beneath high skull-caps: and yet, I think, though they had fire in their look, one or two English seamen carry as much battle in their resolute faces as did these four outlandish mariners. But I hastened to another conflict,—the conflict of sorrow and sickness, in the house of our dear brother David,

* The school-house at Abbotshall, Kirkcaldy, referred to in Chapter IV.

whose hurt in his head threatens him grievously. . . . . In my first visit I liked the complexion of his sickness ill; he was then so moved and over-acted by my visit, that we judged it best that I should not have an interview with him. He had spoken much and delightfully to his excellent wife. . . . . I gathered the family together, and having spoken to them, we had a season of prayer. From whence I proceeded to Mr L——, in order to exhort him and his wife concerning their children, and especially concerning the Sacrament of Baptism, which they sought for the youngest, two months old. They are two saints, as I judge, and our communing was sweet. Thence I passed to Whitecross Street, in order to visit an old couple, Alexander M—— and his wife (he whom we got into the pension society). They are sadly tried with two sons, one of whom has fits of madness; the other, according to his father's account, 'has caught the fever of the day,' become infidel, which he tells me is amazingly spread amongst the tradesmen. Having exhorted them to zeal and steadfastness, I passed on to Sottomayor's, whom I found correcting a Spanish translation of Doddridge's 'Rise and Progress;' and after much sweet discourse—for, dear Isabella, he proves well—his wife came up, and he interpreted between us. She is perplexed most to give up the honour of the Virgin—I should say the idolatry of the Virgin. I prayed with them, as in every other place, and hastened home, expecting letters from my Isabella, which I found not, at Pentonville. Thence I passed, peeping at the book-stalls, and sometimes going a step out of my way, but purchasing nothing, though sore tempted with St Bernard's works, until I reached Bedford Square, where I found the two proof-sheets with the letter, which was like water to my soul. But one o'clock has struck. William Hamilton came at six, when we went to Sir Peter's. . . . . After which, returning home with sweet discourse, I assembled my family, and when I prayed there wept one, I know not which (may they be tears of penitence and contrition!); and having supped upon my cup of milk and slice of toast, I have wrought at this sweet occupation till this early hour. And now, with a husband's and a father's blessing upon my sleeping treasures,—a master's blessing on my faithful servant, and a son and brother's upon all your house,—I go to commit myself to the arms of Him who slumbers not nor sleeps. Farewell.

"*Walthamstow, 29th, Friday.*—This morning, my dear Isabella, I excused myself a little longer rest, by the lateness of my home-returning last night and my weariness, which you

will observe is not right, for unless there be some fixed hour there can be no regularity, of which the great use is to form a restraint upon our wilfulness. Moreover, I always find that the work of the Lord proceeds with me during the day according to my readiness to serve Him in the morning. Oh, when shall my eyes prevent the morning, that I might meditate in His law or lift up my soul unto His throne! After our morning prayers, our friend Mr W. came in, much grieved in spirit by the vexations of the world, and the mistreatments of one whom he thought his friend. But I told him that his faith was unremoved and unremovable, and his wife and children spared to him, and daily bread furnished out to them; therefore, he ought not so sadly to grieve himself. . . . . I addressed myself to my main occupation of preparing food for my people, beginning a lecture upon the first three verses of the eighth chapter of Luke, which I sought to introduce by giving a sketch, chiefly taken from the preceding chapter, of what kind His ministry was likely to be in these cities. In which I think I had no small liberty granted to my mind and to my pen, for which I had earnestly besought the Lord in the morning. And having well exhausted myself by about one o'clock, and brought the discourse to a resting-place, I judged I could not do better than gather my implements and walk over to Walthamstow, that I might have the more time with our afflicted friends. . . . I pursued my road alone, reflecting much upon the emptiness of all our expectations, and the transitoriness of all our enjoyments, seeing that the last time I travelled that way, I had pleased myself with having found a road through the park, by which you and I and dear Edward might oft walk out of a summer eve to see our friends; and now little Edward and our esteemed friend are in the dust. Be it so. I praise the Lord for His goodness, and so do you, my dearest wife. I found our dear friends as I could have wished. . . . . Having assembled the family, and encouraged them to stand fast in the Lord, and see His wonders, we joined in worship, and the ladies retired, leaving me in this room, dear, and sitting in the spot where our friend used so cheerfully to entertain us. . . . . Oh, Isabella, my soul is sometimes stirred up, and sometimes languishes with much faintness, yet with a very faint as well as a very fervent cry, I will entreat Him, that I may be wholly His, in my strength and in my weakness. I pray for you all continually. I bless you and our dear babe night and morning, not forgetting Mary, whom I entreat to advance, and not to go back. . . . . Now, my dearest, how

glad should we be that the fresh, free air of our house was eminently serviceable to Hall, with whom it might have gone very hard in his confined place. The servant is now about to leave us; and then we are Hall, his wife, his wife's cousin, three most worthy people. . . . . So be wholly at rest, my dearest, concerning my comfort, and regulate your time wholly by consideration for your health and dear Margaret's. The solitude does me good. It teaches me my blessedness in such a wife, which I have much forgotten, but now, thank God, forget not. . . . . But time hastens, and my eyes grow heavy and my conceptions dull. The Lord, who preserved the Virgin and the Blessed Babe on their journey to Egypt, preserve my wife and babe, and bring them in safety to their home, and their home in my heart. This night may His arms be around you, and soft and gentle sleep seal your eyelids, and when you awake, may you be with Him. Amen.

"29*th*, *Saturday*.—

"'Long have I view'd, long have I thought,
And trembling held the bitter draught;
But now resolved and firm I'll be,
Since 'tis prepared and mix'd by Thee.

"'I'll trust my great Physician's skill,
What He prescribes can ne'er be ill;
No longer will I groan or pine,
Thy pleasure 'tis—it shall be mine.

"'Thy medicine oft produces smart,
Thou wound'st me in the tenderest part;
All that I prized below is gone;
Yet, Father, still Thy will be done.

"'Since 'tis Thy sentence I shall part
With what is nearest to my heart;
My little all I here resign,
And lo! my heart itself is Thine.

"'Take all, Great God. I will not grieve,
But wish I still had more to give.
I hear Thy voice, Thou bidst me quit
This favour'd gourd: and I submit.'

"These lines, my dearest, were brought in for the consolation of Mrs I—— by the two pious sisters in whom our departed friend used to rejoice so much. I thought them so pious and obedient in their spirit that I immediately copied them out for the consolation of Edward's mother. Dear Isabella, if the fruit of our marriage had been no more than to give birth and being to so sweet a spirit, I would bless the Lord that He had ever given you to my arms.

"I am in Dr M——'s back dining-room, so far on my way home. . . . So, to place myself in the sweetest company which the world possesses for me, I have taken my pen in hand. I know not how it is, my dear, that I find not the communion I looked for in the company of Mrs I——. Her mind is fidgety or flighty; I know not which. . . . So it is with me also, and with all others who nourish their own will in its hidden places. An evidence, my dear, of those who nourish their own will, is the carelessness which they have in expressing their thought, and manifesting it to others. Being manifest to themselves, they stop short and heed not the further revealing it. How this has been my character, and that of Mrs I——! Hence our inability to enter into communion; for communion implies one common, not two several minds. The true access and assurance of good society* is the communion of the Holy Spirit, which if you cultivate, my beloved wife, it will be well for you in all relations, and so also for me. As Christ is the author of all true regulation of the mind or understanding, or reason, so the Holy Ghost is the author of all true love and affection and communion, out of which all forms of society spring. But for Miss B——, I think her, so far as I can judge, a faithful and true disciple of the Lord; rather, perhaps, overtheological, and not enough practised in the inward obedience of the mind. Oh, my dearest, this obedience is the perfection of the Christian,—obedience in the thought, obedience in the feeling, obedience in the action. Think much of this, for it is *true, true!* As I came over these fields and marshes, and by that running water, there revived in me some effeminate feelings, which convince me that there is an intimate connection between the softer and more luxurious forms of nature, and the softer passions of the mind; for I am never visited with any such fleshly thoughts when moving through the mountains and wilds of my native country; and to my judgment this tendency of visible beauty, variety, and richness to cultivate the sensual part of our nature, which obscures the intellectual and moral, in the true account that, being left to themselves without religion, the people of the plains sink into lethargy and luxury of soul far sooner than the people of the mountains. The eye hath more to do with the flesh than any other sense, although they be all its vile ministers. Oh, when shall I be delivered from these base

* Irving uses this word in the Scotch sense—good *company*, fellowship. The social faculty is evidently what he means.

bonds? When shall I desire to be delivered, and loathe them with my soul?

"Dr M—— interrupted me, and I now write by my fireside, whither the Lord has conducted me again in safety, preparing all things for my reception. I have finished both my discourses, and have had a season of discourse and prayer with the three women whose tears are the tokens of their emotion. Oh, that they may be saved! . . Dr M—— pleases me not a little. He is an exact but formal man, yet he seems to possess more insight into theology than I had thought. One discourse was profitable, and full of argument. The University* makes progress, and the good-natured Doctor thinks he has mellowed them into the adoption of some measure defensive of religion. He pleases himself with the thought that Dr Cox can do everything or anything with Brougham. 'The man who thinks he hath Brougham captive hath caught a Tartar. He has more of the whirlpool quality in him than any man I have met with; and he careth not for wisdom, but for power only.' These were some of my exclamations in the midst of the Doctor's simplicity. Observe, Isabella, that the philosopher, or lover of wisdom, is a grade higher than the lovers of power, or the monarchs who have reached it. Hence, when a truly great man chances to be a king, he desires wisdom moreover, as Alfred did, and others after, as Justinian and Napoleon; but no philosopher ever cared to be a king. Pythagoras, or Plato, or Socrates, for instance. There are no philosophers now-a-days, because they are all ambitious of power or eminence. Even Basil Montagu is desirous of power,—that is, his own will; and Coleridge is desirous of power,—that is, the good-will of others, or the idolatry of himself. The Christian is both priest and king, a minister of wisdom and a possessor of power. The rest I leave to your own reflections. I had much earnest discourse with Mr T——, on our way home, concerning his vocation. The Lord be his defence. And now, Edward Irving, another day hath passed over thy head, and hast thou occupied the time well? Art thou worthy of to-morrow? I have passed the day amiss, and am not worthy of to-morrow. I have been in communion with myself. I have loved myself better than another. I know not whether I have been altogether temperate; and yet will I praise the Lord, for I have prayed oft, and I have written my discourses

* London University, which was then being established, and which, in consequence of the exclusion of religion, Irving strenuously opposed.

in a spiritual frame of mind. But, oh! my meditations, why centre ye at home so much? Now may the Lord prepare me for to-morrow's holy dawn, and all my people, and give me strength to beget one unto Christ, whom I may call *my son!* How doth my sweet daughter, my dear child? Thou seed of an immortal! the Lord make light thy swaddling band, and salvation thy swathing round about thee! And thou, my most excellent wife! when shall these eyes behold thee, and these lips call thee blessed, and these arms embrace thee? In the Lord's good time. When Thou judgest it to be best, oh my God, direct them to a good time, and conduct them by a healthy way. Thou doest all things well. And this night encircle them with Thy arm where they lie, and bless the house where they dwell for their sake. Make my wife like the ancient women, and my child like the seed of the Fathers of Thy Church. And, oh, that Thy servant might be held in remembrance by the generation of the godly. Bless also Thine handmaiden, our faithful servant. Even so, my family, let the blessing of God encompass us all.

"*Sunday*, 30*th*.—This has been to me a day to be held in remembrance, my dearest wife, for the strength with which the Lord hath endowed me to manifest His truth. I pray it may be a day to be remembered for the strength with which He hath endowed many of my people to conceive truth and bring forth its fruitfulness. In the morning I arose before eight, and having sought to purify myself by prayer for the sanctification of the Sabbath, I came down to the duties of my family—but before passing out of my bed-chamber, let me take warning, and admonish my dear Isabella, how necessary it is for the first opening of our eyelids upon the sweet light of the morning to open the eye of our soul upon its blessed light, which is Christ, otherwise the tempter will carry us away to look upon some vanity or folly in the kingdom of this world, and so divert our souls as that, when they come to lift themselves up to God, they shall find no concentration of spirit upon God, no sweet flow of holy desires, no strong feeling of want to extort supplication or groanings of soul; so that we shall have complainings of absence instead of consolations of His holy presence; barrenness and leanness for faithfulness and beauty. So, alas, I found it in the morning, but the Lord heard the voice of my crying, and sent me this instruction, which may He enable me and my dear wife to profit from in the time to come. After our family worship, in which I read the first chapter of the Hebrews, as preparatory to reading it in the church, Mr

Dinwiddie, our worthy and venerable elder, came in as usual, and we joined in prayer for the blessing of the Lord upon the ministry of the Word this day throughout all the churches, and especially in the church and congregation given into our hand; whereupon he departed, having some preparations to make before the service, and I went alone, meditating upon the first of Hebrews, which has occupied my thoughts so much all the week. We began by singing the first six verses of the forty-fifth Psalm, whose reference to Messiah I shortly instructed the people to bear in mind. In prayer I found much liberty, especially in confession of sin and humiliation of soul, for the people seemed bowed down, very still and silent, and full of solemnity—then, having read the first of Hebrews, I told them that it was the epistle for instructing them in the person and offices of Christ as our mediator, both priest and king; but that it wholly bore upon the present being of the man Christ Jesus, from the time that he was begotten from the dead, not upon his former being, from eternity before He became flesh, which was best to be understood from the Gospel by John; but for the new character which He had acquired by virtue of His incarnation and resurrection, and the relations in which He stood to the Church and to the world, this epistle is the great fountain of knowledge, though, at the same time, it throws much light upon His eternal Sonship and Divinity, by the way of allusion and acknowledgment in passing; that the purpose of the epistle was to satisfy the believing Hebrews, who were terribly assailed and tempted by their unbelieving brethren, and confirm them in the superiority of Christ to Moses as a law-giver, to Aaron and the Levitical priesthood as a priest, and to angels, through whose ministry they believed that the law was given, as the Apostle himself teacheth in his Epistle to the Galatians. And therefore he opens with great dignity the solemn discourse by connecting Christ with all the prophets, and exalts Him above all rank and comparison by declaring His inheritance, His workmanship, His prerogative of representing God, of upholding the universe, of purging our sins by Himself, and sitting at the right hand of the majesty on high. Then, addressing himself to his work, he demonstrates His superiority to angels, in order, not to the adjustment of His true dignity—which he had already made peerless—but to the exaltation of the dispensation which He brought, above the former which was given by angels. This demonstration he makes by reference to psalms which, by the belief of all the Jewish Church, from the earliest times,

were understood of Messiah; which quotations, however, far surpass, infinitely surpass, the purpose for which they are quoted, placing Him, each one, on a level with God to us, at least, to whom that doctrine hath been otherwise revealed. But those Psalms looking forward to *Messiah's* glory can consequently have only an application posterior to the time that He was Messiah, and that He was Messiah in humility. Therefore, the 'this day' is the day either of His birth or of His ascension, the 'first-begotten' is from the dead, and the 'kingdom' is the kingdom purchased by His obedience unto the death; and hence the reason given for His exaltation is, because He hath loved righteousness and hated iniquity. These trains of reasoning and quotation being concluded, I challenged them to remark the sublimity of that from the 102nd Psalm, and thence took occasion to rebuke them very sharply for going after idolatries of profane poets, and fictitious novelists, and meagre sentimentalists, who are Satan's prophets, and wear his livery of malice, and falsehood, and mocking merriment, while they forsook the prophets of the Lord, and their sublime, pathetic, true, wise, and everlasting forms of discourse. Then having begun with a prayer that the Lord would make the reading of this Epistle effectual to the confirming their faith in Christ's character, offices, and work, and possessing them of the efficacy thereof, I concluded with a prayer that the Lord would enlarge our souls by that powerful word which had now been preached to us of His great grace.

"Then we sung the last verses of the 102nd Psalm, and prayed in the words of the Lord. The sermon* was from Phil. i. 21; to which I introduced their attention by explaining my object to show them the way to possess and be assured of that victory over death, of which, last Lord's day, I showed them the great achievement (1 Cor. xv. 55—57); then having, in a few sentences, embodied Paul's sublime dilemma between living and dying, I joined earnest battle with the subject, and set to work to explain the life that was Christ, which I drew out of Gal. ii. 20, to consist in a total loss of personality and self, and surrender of all our being unto Him who had purchased us with His blood, leaving us no longer 'our own'—which condition of being, though it seem

* This wonderful *résumé* of the day's services will give a better idea than any description of the lengthened and engrossing character of these discourses, into which the preacher went with his whole soul and heart; and of the extraordinary fascination which could hold his audience interested through exercises so long, close, and solemn.

ideal and unattainable, is nothing else than the obedience of the first great commandment, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,' &c.; since to be so identified and at one with Christ, was only to be wholly in love with, and obedient to, the Father. Now this condition of life must insure to all who have reached to it, the same grace at death which Christ, the man Christ, the Messiah, by His resurrection, attained to—or, if not wholly at death, partially then, and wholly at the resurrection. For I argued from the 2nd of the Hebrews, that whatever Christ attained to, His people attained to, and also from all the promises in the 2nd and 3rd of the Revelation to those who overcome. This gave me great purchase upon the subject, allowing me the whole scope of the contrast between Christ's humiliation and exaltation; which having wrought according to my gift, I then proceeded to show the vanity of any lower estimate of the life which is 'Christ' by touching many popular errors, such as place it in a sound faith merely, or in a correct morality, or in a religious conformity, against which having opposed the universality and unreservedness of obedience, the thoroughness of redemption, and the perfectness of regeneration, I told them, and warned them, of sad misgivings on a death-bed, of desperate fears and hoodwinkings of the conscience, showing them that the believer could not die hard, like the unbeliever, or brutified, like the carnalist; and I prayed them, when these doubtings came upon them, to remember that this day they had been warned by a minister of the Gospel. I had a good deal of matter still remaining, but Mr Lee's child being to be baptized, and the quarterly collection to be gathered, I stopped there—the place being convenient.

"We sang the three first verses of the 23rd Psalm, and concluded. Mr Hamilton walked home with me, and we enjoyed much spiritual discourse. I refused to dine with him, and also with Mr Dinwiddie, and had my chop, which, being eaten with thankfulness, was sweet. Benjamin shared with me, and was sadly afflicted to hear of little Edward's death. I am sure it does not trouble you to speak of our departed joy, else I would desist. I rested the interval, meditating upon the 22nd chapter of Genesis; and having gone forth, not without prayer and thanksgiving, to my second ministry, I have reason to give God thanks for his gracious support. From the chapter I took occasion first to observe, in general, that it was for the instruction of families, as the fount of nations, in God's holiness; . . . . I observed how it was, that idolatry in the people and true

piety in the king, were found together; even as, among the Roman Catholics, you have among the priests singular saints, while the body of the people are rank and gross idolaters . . . . . The lecture was upon Luke xiii. 1; when I sought, first, to give the character of our Lord's ministry in their towns and villages, deriving it from the specimen of Nain, and other fragments from the preceding pages, its munificence of well-doing, its public discourses, sifting and sounding the hearers, its private ministrations in houses and families, improving each to the justification and recommendation of a higher kind of ministry than what presently prevails among us. . . . Such, dear, hath been my employment this day, of which I give you this account before I sleep, that you may be edified. . . . . The Lord be gracious unto you, and to our little babe, and to our faithful servant, for He regards me accountable for all my household. Therefore I exhort you all to holiness and love. The Lord unite us all in peace and blessedness.

"*Monday*, 31*st October*.—I now sit down, my dear Isabella, to give you the humble history of another day, which, from yesterday's exhaustion, hath been a day of weakness. What a restraint and hindrance this flesh and blood is upon the inflamed spirit, and to what degradation that spirit is reduced which doth not beat its weary breast against the narrow cage which confineth it. But to fret and consume away with struggles against the continent flesh, is rather the part of discontented and proud spirits, than of those who are enlightened in the faith of Christ, to whom the encumbrance which weighs them down is a constant memorial of the resurrection, and by the faith of the resurrection, soothed down into patience and contentment. Besides, the bodily life is to them the period of destinies so infinite, and the means of charities so enlarged, that it is often a matter of doubt and question with them, as with St Paul, whether it is better to depart and be with Christ, which is far better, or to remain in the flesh, which is more profitable to the Church. And I do trust that my abode this day in an overstrained tabernacle hath not been unprofitable to that Church which is the pillar and ground of the truth. It was a day devoted to private conversations with those who propose, for the first time, to join themselves to the church, at our approaching communion. When I came down to breakfast, my table was spread with the welcome news of Anne P——'s merciful delivery, which Mr M—— had come to tell me of, but not finding me, had written out. Sottomayor was waiting for me

and joined with us in our morning worship. He is in good cheer, but in want of another hour's teaching, in order to keep his head above water, which, I trust, will be obtained for him by that merciful Providence which has watched over his wife and him. By-the-by, I had taken upon me the task of inquiring, while in the north, what opening Edinburgh presented for his brother, the soldier, which my various unforeseen duties hindered me from fulfilling. Would you give that in trust to some one and let me know? I think Sottomayor, the priest, is truly confirmed in the faith, and I have good reason to think that the soldier is finding relief for the multitude of his doubts. There came also to breakfast with me a Mr M—— and a Mr C--— (I think), of neither of whom I know anything, except that the former had met me in Glasgow. He has come to this town on adventure, like so many of our countrymen, and came to me in his straits to help him to a situation, leading with him, or being led by, the other lad. I thought it hard enough to be by so slight a thread bound to so secular a work; but looking to the lad, and seeing in him an air of seriousness and good sense, and thinking of his helplessness, I felt it my duty to encourage him; and though I could not depart from my rule of not meddling with secular affairs, and stated so to him plainly, I pencilled him a word to Alex. Hamilton, to give him counsel. At the same time I declared to him what I believe to be the truth, that this coming upon venture from a place we are occupied well, and sustained in daily food from our occupation, merely that we may rise in the world, is not a righteous thing before God, however approved by our ambitious countrymen; and though it may be successful in bringing them to what they seek, a fortune and an establishment in the world, it is generally unsuccessful in increasing them in the riches of the kingdom, in which they become impoverished every day, until they are the hardest, most secular, worldly, and self-seeking creatures which this metropolis contains. Let them come, if they have any kindred or friends to whose help they may come, or if they be in want, for then they come on an errand which the Lord may countenance; but let them come merely for desire of gain, or of getting on, and they come at Mammon's instigation, with whom our God doth not co-operate at all. . . . . I began the duties of the day at ten o'clock, with Mrs C——, the woman whom Lady Mackintosh recommended to you for a matron. She has been a mother of tears, having lost, since she came to England, about twenty-five years ago, husband, and child, and mother,

and brothers three, and all her kindred but one brother, who still lives in Buchan. The loss of her little daughter, at six years of age, by an accident upon the streets, brought her to the very edge of derangement, in the excess of her grief, so that, like Job, she was glad when the sun went down, and shut out the cheerful light from her eyes. But the Lord restrained this natural sorrow, that it should not work utter death, as its nature is to do, in consideration, I doubt not, of her faith, and for the further sanctification of her soul. . . . She left Scotland without her mother's consent (why, I did not venture to ask), and in six months her mother was no more to give or withhold her consent, which made her miseries in England have something in them, to her mind, of a mother's curse; and this, she told me, was bitterness embittered. Tell this to all your sisters, that they may honour their parents, and never gainsay their mother. Tell it also to Mary, and let Mary tell it to her sisters; but withhold the woman's name; that, like many other things I write, is to yourself alone. . . . . This good woman, whose face is all written over with sorrow and sadness, like Mrs M——'s, had been a member of Dr Nicol's church till his death, whose ministry had been to her a great consolation. Tell this to James Nicol when you see him; and say that, now that he is inheriting his father's prayers, he must walk in his father's footsteps, and comfort the afflicted flock of Christ, which is our anointed calling, as it was that of our great Master. Obey this at the commandment of your husband. This woman satisfied me well, both as to knowledge and spirit, and I admitted her freely thus far. She is now a sort of guardian-servant to a lady in Bloomsbury, who has partial and occasional aberrations of mind. The Lord bless her in such a tender case!

"My next spiritual visitants were the two Misses A——, whom I am wont to meet at Mr Cassel's, of whom the younger came to my instructions, drawn by spiritual concern, the elder to accompany the younger, and thus both have been led to come forward—I fear the latter still rather as a companion than as a disciple. But, oh, the difference, as a lad who has just parted from me said, 'Grace gives to the youth a fuller majesty, without any petty pride,' so I found it here in the difference between the living spirit of the one's conversation and words, and the shaped formality and measured cadence of the other. I propose looking here a little deeper; but as I have several days devoted to further instruction, I made no demur at present, though I counselled them fervently and prayed with them both. My next was a

Miss S——, from Johnstone, near Paisley, who has come to London to be under her brother's medical care,—a fine Scotch head, with an art-pale countenance, and fine Grecian outline of face; she is a regular member of the church in her native place, but out of her own will came to speak with me; and, though feeble in strength, we were able to commune and pray together to our mutual comfort. My last, at one o'clock, was Mrs R——, a widow lady of most devout and intelligent appearance, who has been in the habit, for many months, of attending my Wednesday ministrations, bringing a son or a daughter in her hand, with the latter of whom, a sweet girl of about seven, she came attended. And we joined in discourse, and I found in her a most exercised and tender spirit, whose husband of her youth had been cut off from her in the East Indies, and left her three sons and a daughter; the former she had now come up to town to prepare for cadetships; afterwards to return, with her daughter, to the country again, to rear her in the fear of the Lord. And of her eldest son, whom she had watched over with such care for six years, having for that time lived with them in Beverley, for no other end but to educate them herself, in which occupation she met with the healing of God to her own soul in the midst of scoffers and deriders (whereof the memory to mention drew the tears from her eyes)—her eldest son, who had shown no signs of grace under her most careful instruction, being now, like herself, for the sake of the Hindostanee language, placed among the alien as his mother was, has since shown such a new character, and written such letters, as she never expected to receive from him; and then she communed with me of sweet domestic interests, in such a devout and simple way, with so many applications for instruction, and such a tender interest in two half-caste daughters of her husband, whom she has cared for as her own, that I delight to think what a sweet companion she will make for you, my dearest, when you return. Thus passed a forenoon, not without its mark in memory's chart.

"I walked down to Mrs M——'s, in order to inquire after Anne. . . . . But time forestalls my wishes, dear Isabella. Twelve has struck, and the sweetest, holiest scene of the day remains untold. I prayed for a son, and the Lord this night hath brought me my son, Henry S——, a youth who called on me before my northern visit, and then showed tokens of grace which I had not time to consider; but this night, though but an apprentice, he hath, being the last of my visitants, showed such wonderful seriousness of mind,

soberness of reason, purity of life, and richness of character, as far outpasses in promise any youth that I have been the means of bringing unto Christ. And when at nine we assembled to prayer, and Hall showed his pale, emaciated face, and head but sprouting again from the shaver's razor, along with the rest of my household, and I gave him my easy-chair in consideration of his weakness—oh, Isabella, I felt like a priest and a patriarch! and the Lord enabled us to have one of the sweetest occasions of praising Him and serving Him which for a long time I have enjoyed; so that we parted bedewed with tears, from our prayers, in which we never forgot you and our separated family. After which, while I partook of my usual repast, I glanced at that very remarkable article 'Milton,' in the 'Edinburgh Review,' which came in from the library. I take it to be young Macaulay's. It is clever—oh, it is full of genius!—but little grace. Theology of this day—politics of this day—neither sound. Oh, envious Time, why dunnest thou me? Oh, envious Sleep, why callest thou me? I write to my wife, to comfort and edify her,—and bless her, and my babe, and my servant, and all my kindred of her father's honourable and pious house. Well, I come. Farewell, my dear wife.

"*November* 1*st*, *Tuesday*.—The command of King George could not have made me take a pen in my hand this night, dearest Isabella; and now that I have taken it in hand, I exceedingly question whether this weary head will drive it over another line. But, dear, your thanks with me! I have had such a harvest of six precious souls, whose spiritual communications have carried me almost beyond my power of enduring delight. The Lord doth indeed honour me. But ah! this will not do; I must leave off. To-morrow, the Lord sparing me, I will set forth the particulars to my Isabella, whom, with my dear daughter, may the Lord this night preserve.

"2*nd*, *Wednesday*.—It was well-nigh nine o'clock before I was recruited this morning with strength enough to go forth to my labours; for these mental and spiritual labours, being in excess, do as truly require an extra quantity of rest as do bodily and social labours. But I have risen, thank God, well recruited, and have proceeded thus far on the day (five o'clock) very prosperously. The first of my communicants yesterday was a Mary B——, from Hatton Garden, a young woman of a sweet and gracious appearance and discourse, who, with her mother and a numerous family, were early cast upon God's care, who hath cared for them according to

His promise. I was much pleased with the simplicity and sincerity of her heart, and the affectionate way in which she spoke of her Lord; so that she left no doubt on my mind of her being, to the extent of her knowledge and talents, a faithful and true disciple. I shall seek another interview with her; for I do not feel that I have got acquainted with her spirit, or else it is of so simple and catholic a form as to have no character to distinguish it. The next was my old acquaintance, Sarah Evans, the wild girl, who was somewhat carried in her mind, if you remember, in the beginning of a sermon, and whom I visited at Dr ——'s, in Bloomsbury. I little expected to see her so soon, and so completely restored; although she still gives one the idea of one on whom our friend Greaves would work wonders by animal magnetism. I have a moral certainty that this is her temperament, and that her temporary instability was rather a somnambulism of the spirit than any insanity or derangement of mind. Since her seventeenth year she has been a denizen of this great hive of men, friendless and without kindred, and has partook the watchful care of the Great Shepherd. She is a spirit full of inspirations. Her very words are remarkable, and there is a strange abundance and fertility in her sayings which astonishes me. She has already had much influence on her fellow-servants, who have banished cards and idle, worldly books. Poor Sarah! (and yet thou art not poor), I feel a strange feeling towards thee, as if thou wert not wholly dwelling upon the earth, nor wholly present when I converse with thee. And sure it is, dear Isabella, she has always to recall herself, as from a distance, before she answers your inquiries; and even the word is but like an echo. Of her spirituality I have no doubt, though still she seems to me like a stranger. Her master at present is Dr. H——, one of my brother's medical teachers here, who inquires at her occasionally about my brother, and about the Caledonian Church; from which I presume that every one recognizes in her the same unlikeness to another, and to her station.

"These occupied me till eleven o'clock, after which I went forth to breathe the air into the garden, in expectation of another visitor; and, as usual, for his memory hangs on every twig, the little darling whom I used to fondle and instruct came to my remembrance, and bowed me down with a momentary sorrow, which passed, full of sweetness, into what train of thought I have now forgotten. I occupied myself with my Convocation book, which is to me what a politician and Christian of the year 1600 would be, if I could have

him to converse with me and deliver his opinions. It embodies the ideas of the English Church, in full convocation, upon all points connected with the government of the Church and of the world; and hath done more than any other thing to scatter the rear of radicalism from my mind, and to give me insight into the true principles of obedience to government. There are, my dear, certain great feelings or laws of the soul, under which it grows into full stature; of which obedience to government is one, communion with the Church is another, trust in the providence of God another, and so forth; which form the original demand in the soul, both for religion, and law, and family, and to answer which these were appointed of God, and are preserved by His authority. My notion is, that the ten commandments contain the ten principal of these mother-elements of a thriving soul—these laws of laws, and generating principles of all institutions. These also, I think, ought to be made the basis of every system of moral and political philosophy. But all this is but looming upon my eye, and durst not be spoken in Scotland, under the penalty of high treason against their laws of logic, and their enslaved spirit of discourse. By-the-by, when I speak of Scotland, it was about this time of day when I received a letter from Dr Gordon, asking me to preach a sermon in some chapel which Dr Waugh has procured for the Scots Missionary Society, and bring the claims of that Society before the great people of London. I mean to answer it by referring them to my *Orations on the Missionary Doctrine*, as being my contribution to the Society. . . . But I must go to the church to preach from John xiv. 27. The Lord strengthen me!

"And now, having enjoyed no small portion of His presence for one so unworthy, I return to my sweet occupation of making my dear Isabella the sharer and partner of my very soul. From the garden, where I communed with the canons of the convocation, and with my own meditations on these elemental principles of wisdom, I returned, and upon looking over my paper, I found I had no more visitors till five o'clock; so I addressed myself to my discourse, which I purposed from Gal. ii. 20, in continuation and enlargement of that from Phil. i. 21; but going into the context, I was drawn away to write concerning the Church in Antioch, which occasioned the dispute between Paul and Peter, until I found it was too late to return; so that my discourse has changed its shape into a lecture, and where it will end you shall know on Sabbath, if the Lord spare me. At five came

a young man, by name Peter Samuel, of a boyish appearance, very modest and backward, a native of Edinburgh, and by trade a painter in grain; in whom, Isabella, I found such real utterance of the spirit, such an uplifted and enlarged soul, that I could but lie back upon my chair and listen. The Lord bless the youth! It was very marvellous; such grace, such strength of understanding, such meekness, such wisdom! He is also one of the fruits of my ministry; had wandered like a sheep without a shepherd, 'creeping by the earth,' until, in hearing me, he seemed exalted into the third heavens, at times hardly knowing whether he was in the body or out of the body. 'And all the day long, at my work, I am happy and in communion with the church, which is everywhere diffused around me like the air;' and he arose into the mysteries of the Trinity, and his soul expatiated in a marvellous way. At six I had made double appointments; the one for James Scott, a stately, bashful lad from Earlston, on the Leader, between Lauder and Melrose—the residence, in days of yore, of Thomas the Rhymer—who is come to town to prosecute his studies as an artist. He is already in full communion with the church, but loved the opportunity of conversing with me; and the other was of two who desire to come in company, John R——, a man of about thirty-five, and C——, a young lad about twenty. Moreover, Samuel had not departed; and I think they had been congregated of the Lord on very purpose to encourage my heart and strengthen my hands, for it is not to be told what a heavenly hour they spent in making known the doings of the Lord to their souls; and the two latter told me that every Sabbath they held meetings, before and after church, with others of the church. Poor Samuel had been lamenting his loneliness, but now his soul was filled with company who welcomed him to their heart; and Scott had now one whose spirit and manners attracted him; and I was lost in wonder how the Lord should work such things by my unworthiness. But remembering my ministerial calling, I opened to them the duty of self-denial in the expression of our spiritual experiences before the world, lest they should profane the sanctuaries of our God; and the necessity of wisdom to veil with parable and similitude, before the weak eye of man, the brightness of the pure and simple truth, reserving for the Lord and for his saints the unveiled revelations of our higher delights. Upon which life having enlarged to their great seeming contentment, we joined our prayers together, and they departed. Now these men who thus commune together are of most di-

verse ranks. C—— is a gentleman's son; R——, though of high expectations, has been reduced to fill some inferior office in Clement's Inn; and the others, whom I know, are Scotch lads, working as journeymen; so true is it that there is no difference in Christ Jesus. After seven I went to the meeting of the Sabbath-school teachers. . . After I returned home, I wrote a letter to Constantinople to L——, who sends us the figs, exhorting him to stand fast among the alien; which altogether was a day of such exhaustion as unfitted me for writing to you the particulars of it, that you might rejoice in my joy, and give praise unto the Lord, when you know the blessing which He is pouring out upon my ministry. Oh, that He would give me food for these sheep, and a rich pasture, and a shepherd's watchfulness, and the love of the chief Shepherd, that I might even die for them if need were! In all which spiritual conditions I am much encouraged by what yesterday the Lord brought before me.

"And now, dearest, this day hath been a day of thought which has hardly yet taken form to be distinctly represented; but on Sabbath I will communicate the result. Only I have had much insight given me into the Epistle to the Galatians, from which the matter of my discourse will be taken. At six I went forth to my duties, and opened to my children the nature of the Christian Church, as being to the world what the new man is to the old; what the body, after the resurrection, is to the present body. . . After which, commending them to the grace of God, I returned to the vestry, and came forth again to discourse to the people of Christ's bequest of peace. . . But though my head could thus rudely block out the matter, I wanted strength and skill to delineate it as it deserved; which, if I be in strength, I shall do it another time. . . After the lecture, ten more came desirous to converse with me; so that I shall have, by the blessing of God, a very rich harvest this season. . . . The Lord be with thy spirit!

"*Thursday, Nov. 3rd.*—Last night, my dearest Isabella, upon my bed I had one of those temptations of Satan, with which I perceive, by your affectionate letter, that you are oft troubled, and which I shall therefore recount to you. The occasion of it was the memory of our beloved boy, who hath now got home out of Satan's dominion. That morning he was taken by the Lord I was sleeping in the back room, when dear sister Anne, who loved him as dearly as we all did, came in about three or four o'clock in the morning, and said, 'Get up, for Edward is much worse.' The sound of

these words, caught in my sleeping ear, shot a cold shiver through my frame like the hand of death, and I arose. Of this I had not thought again till, last night on my bed, before sleeping, Satan seemed to bring to my ear these words; and, as he brought them, the cold shiver trickled to my very extremities. I thought to wile it away, but it was vain; and I remembered that the only method of dealing with him is by faith, and of overcoming him by the word of God. So I took his suggestion in good part, and meditated all the sufferings of the darling, which are too fresh upon my mind; and sought to ascend, by that help, to the sympathy of our Lord's sufferings, and to take refuge (as the old divines say) in the clefts of His wounds till this evil should be overpast. Whereupon there came sweet exercises of faith, which occupied me till I fell asleep, and awoke this morning in the fear of the Lord. I make Mondays and Thursdays my days of receiving friends; and while we were engaged with worship, Mr Ker came in, and, after prayers, Mr C——. I was happy to understand from the former that Mr Cunningham, of Harrow, has become a violent opponent of the expediency principle in respect to the Apocrypha,* and think the committee will come to the righteous conclusion, which will please our good father much. Mr C—— came on purpose to communicate the dying injunction of a friend who had been converted from Unitarianism by my discourse on that heresy last summer, and had died full of faith and joy before fulfilling his purpose of joining my church. I trust he hath joined our Church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. As we went to the city together Mr Ker bore the same testimony to the blessing of my discourses to his soul. . . . For which I desire you to give thanks unto the Lord when you pray secretly, or with Mary; for it is a great blessing to our household to be so honoured. I found our friend David at length able to see me again, who has passed through a terrible storm of afflictions, swimming for his life, and tried with great agony of the body; but in his soul above measure strengthened and endowed with patience, and full of holy purposes and continued acknowledgment to the Lord. . . . His wife, and Martha, her sister, bore testimony to the goodness of the Lord, and we joined our souls in thanksgiving with one accord.

* Referring to the hot and bitter conflict then going on in the Bible Society, chiefly between the parent Society in England and its Scotch auxiliaries, which were vehemently opposed to the insertion of the Apocrypha along with the canonical Scriptures.

"Thence I went on my way to our friends the G——s, who now live in America Square, towards the Tower. I know not how it is, but I feel a certain infirmity and backwardness to speak to Alex. G—— concerning spiritual things, though I love him, and believe that he loves the truth; against which, by the grace of God, I was enabled in some measure to prevail, and make some manifestation of the truth, and unite in prayer, which had the effect of bringing him to signify his purpose of waiting upon me (I suppose concerning the communion). The Lord receive this worthy and honourable youth into the number of his chosen! Thence returning, I felt an inclination to pay a visit to Miss F——, in Philpot Lane; but resolved again to proceed on more urgent errands, and passed the head of the lane, and was drawn back, I know not by what inducement, and proceeded against my purpose. It was the good will of the Lord that I should comfort one of His saints, and He suffered me not to pass. I found the mother of that family, who has long walked with God, and travailed in birth for the regeneration of all her children, laid down by a confusion in her head, which threatened apoplexy or palsy; and now for three days afflicted, without that clear manifestation of the Holy Comforter which might have been expected in one so exercised with faith and holiness. Many of the friends and kindred were assembled in the large room below, and the father and the children; to whom having ministered the word of warning and exhortation, and prayed with one accord for the state of the sick, I went up to her bed-chamber with the father and daughters, and found the aged mother lying upon the bed more composed than I had expected. I taught her that Christ was the same, though her faculties were bedimmed; that her soul should the more long to escape from behind the dark eclipse of the clouds; but not to disbelieve in His mercy, because her body burdened her, and caused her to groan. We bowed down and prayed, and the Lord gave me a large utterance; and when I had ceased, I could not refrain myself from continuing to kneel, and hold the hand of the dear saint, and comfort her, and utter many ejaculatory prayers for her soul's consolation; and I was moved even to tears for the love of her soul. With which having parted, her daughters, who remained behind, came down and told us that she was much comforted, and had proposed to compose herself to rest. The Lord rest her soul, and prepare it for His kingdom! though I hope she may be restored again to health. . . .

"Thence I proceeded to Bedford Square, by Cheapside, and gave Mr Hamilton charge of your letter, which may you receive safe, and with a blessing, for it is intended for your comfort and edification in the faith; that you may know the goodness of the Lord to your head, and rejoice and give thanks. On my way to Bedford Square, I called at Mr Macaulay's, having heard that he and his wife were poorly; and with a view, if opportunity offered, of saying a word to their son concerning Milton's true character, if so be that he is the author of that critique. For I held with him once, but now am assured that Milton, in his character, was the archangel of Radicalism, of which I reckon Henry Brougham to be the arch-fiend. But I found they had gone to Hannah More's for retirement and discourse. The Lord bless their communion! I called at Mr Procter's to look at two marvellous heads by Correggio—the one of the Virgin about to be crowned with stars; the other of St John: certainly, beyond comparison, the most powerful heads I have ever seen. The latter, they say, is a portrait of me. But I do not think so. I cannot both be like the Baptist and the beloved Apostle; I would I were in spirit, for the flesh profiteth nothing. Anne P—— and the child continue to do well, and the poet is already a very tender father. . . . . The Counsellor and I had a good deal of private discourse. . . . . He is a tender father, and a well-meaning man, but wilful; and wilfulness, dear Isabella, is weakness and inutility; *the excess of will being to the same effect as the defect of will.* Yet I love him, and he loves me, and permits me to open truth in a certain guise to his ear. The Lord give me wisdom, if it were only for this family! I returned home to peruse Eckhard's 'Rome,' and to worship with my family and read the Holy Scriptures, and conclude by writing the summary of the day to my dear wife. And now I return to my chamber, thankful unto Thee, oh my Father, who hast protected thine unworthy child, and not allowed him this day to stray far from thy commandments. Thou hast made me to know Thee; Thou hast exercised my soul with love and kindness; Thou hast called me out of the world by prayer. I bless Thee, oh my God; I exceedingly bless Thee! And now, my tender wife, go on to seek the Lord; wait upon Him; entreat Him; importune Him. Do not let Him go till He give thee thy heart's desire. And thou, Margaret, my sister, submit thy strong spirit unto the Lord, and thou shalt find peace. And Elizabeth, my sister, persevere in the good part which thou hast chosen, and thou wilt find all that is pro-

mised to be true and faithful. And, my lovely Anne, be composed in thy spirit by God, who will deliver thee from all things that disconcert and trouble, and make thy spirit lovely. And, my David, remember our covenants of love with one another, wherein thou wert oft moved to desire God. Oh, forget Him not, my children! Walk before Him, and be ye perfect. . . . . May He keep us as the apple of the eye, and hide us under the shadow of His wings this night; and when we awake in the morning, may we be satisfied with His likeness!

"*Tuesday, Nov. 4th.*—I feel it necessary already to be on my guard against the adversary, lest he should convert these journals, intended for the comfort of my dear wife, into an occasion of self-display or self-delusion: and the more because I have been singularly blessed by the goodness of the Lord, which, you would say, was the best protection against him; but the Lord judged otherwise when, after enriching Paul with such revelations, he saw it wise to give him a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure. Therefore let me watch my pen, and the Lord watch my soul, that nothing pass thence to the eye of my partner which may in any wise convey a false impression of my heart. I have resumed my custom of reading the lessons of the day, besides the Psalms, whatever else I may read out of the Holy Scriptures, and was struck, in reading out of Ecclesiasticus, with the odour of earthliness which there is about the wisdom of it. It is rather shrewd than divine; and, I am convinced, has little heavenward drift in it to the soul. But how much more spiritual than the maxims of Rochefoucault, or any other modern who has sought to express himself by aphorisms! I was in great danger of falling under the spirit of indolence after breakfast, and loitering. The sensation about my eyes, which foretells a listless day, made its appearance; and I felt inclined to stretch my limbs, and take up a book at hand, and while away the time. But I thank God, who enabled me to withstand the enemy, and to stir myself up to study, which I prosecuted with a view to my morning sermon. This is beginning to take shape, and will form, I judge, a digest of the Epistle to the Galatians, or a statement of the Apostle's argument for the abolition of the law and the liberty of faith, in order to my afterwards showing our deliverance from the forms of the world into the liberty of Christ.

"This was a fast-day to me, at least a soup-day, which I judged good for my health, so that I felt languid the whole

forenoon until four, when Miss A—— called to conduct me to her house. The two Miss A——s joined our church at the last communion. Their mother had died some months before, and they are orphans. They win their bread by the needle, and dwell with two younger brothers, whom they wished me much to converse with. Those two brothers have no one over them, and are as wild as the beasts of the wood. Though only fifteen and seventeen, I was perfectly amazed at the irreverent, thoughtless way in which they behaved when I entered—nothing awed, nothing moved, but full of conceit and self-possession. The eldest is a clerk in a writer's (*Anglicè*, attorney's) office; the younger is a sort of clerk to a councillor,—one to keep the door of his office open, and to go errands—for whom his master is glad to find something to do. Oh! what a horrid effect London has upon the character of children! It is only beginning to be revealed to me in its native deformity. The awful iniquity of a great city is nothing to its silent effects in deteriorating the races of men. They really dwindle as if they were plants. I saw at once that if I was to be profitable to these two lads it was by authority as well as by affection; so I resolved to teach them the reverence of God, and of God's word, and of God's messenger. The eldest sat over against me on the other side of the fire, the two sisters working at the table, and the youngest beyond the table, and he would not be persuaded to come near me. I opened my way by speaking of their orphan state, and their want of counsel and authority over them. Then I passed to the authority of God, and opened the tendency of youth to be headstrong and untamed. The eldest, I perceived, was full of observation and thought. He could not divide the matter between the authority and affection with which I spoke. By degrees I got him to open his mind, which was very wilful. I continued to oppose to his whims the will of God, and would not lower the discourse to any compromise, or indulgence to any of his moods. His brother had to go away earlier; and after getting him to sit beside me, I spoke to him with great earnestness and affection, and blessed him; but whether he was moved from his indolent and lethargic obstinacy, I know not. Then with the eldest I dealt for another hour, in various discourse, which I am now too weary to recall. And when I knew not what impression I had made upon his short and hasty temper, which I saw writhing between the awe of the truths which I spoke, and the irritation of the mastery which I held over him, the lad rose from his seat, and went to a press and

took out a parcel, from which he drew forth a set of beautiful little prints of Bible subjects, and asked if I had seen them. I answered, no. Then, said he, 'Will you accept them from me?' I hesitated; but perceiving it was altogether necessary, if I would have any further dealing with this strange spirit, I took them; and here they are before me. Upon which his hour of seven having come, he went his way. . . . . I am weary, but very well; and give the Lord thanks for his goodness, praying Him to strengthen me with rest. St Pancras is ringing up the hill twelve o'clock. So the Lord compass you and my beloved child. Farewell!

"*Saturday, Nov.* 5.—I had all arranged to finish this sheet and send it off to-night; but James P—— is come, and has occupied me so much, and the Sabbath is now on the verge of coming in, and I have much before me, therefore I delay this day's summary till to-morrow evening, if God spare me. But that I might not go to bed without blessing you and our tender lamb, I have taken up my pen to write—That the Lord God, whom I serve, would be the guardian of my wife and child until He restore them to the sight of his servant. Amen.

"*Sabbath, Nov.* 6.—And now, my dearest Isabella, I am alone with thee again, and can give thee the news which are dearest to thy heart, that the Lord hath not deserted His unworthy servant this day, but hath been, especially in the evening, present to my soul, and given me a large door of utterance, I trust to the edification of His church, and the comforting of His people. Yesterday I had laboured all the morning with a constant and steady diligence, and about one o'clock was in full sight of land, with strength of hand still left me to have finished this letter, and so cheated the lazy post, when, as I said, James P—— stept in; in whom, to be brief, I find we shall have a most easily accommodated inmate, if so he likes to become, and a very shrewd, logical companion, full of political economy and of mathematics, who cannot help stating everything as if it were a question to be resolved by the Calculus, and cannot conceive of any ideas or knowledge which are to be otherwise come at than by the methods of the intellect; which error I have laboured hard to correct in him, and not, I believe, without some partial success. He is one of the coolest, shrewdest intellects I have ever met with,—sweetly disposed, very gentle, and easily served. . . . . My morning lesson this day was the 2nd chapter of the Hebrews, in which is taught us this great lesson, that we shall partake with Christ in the government

of the world to come, which I take to be the same with the 'rest that remaineth,' mentioned in the 4th chapter, or the perfection of the present dispensation of the Gospel in the millennial state. . . . . Also there is taught us, though but incidentally, the end of His incarnation, to destroy death, and him that hath the power of death, and deliver us from the fear and bondage of death. Let us enter into faith, my dear wife, and be delivered from the blow which death hath brought us. . . . . Also He took our flesh that we might be assured of our oneness; that we might be able to give ourselves to the hope of His glory, He did first join himself to the reality of our humility. My discourse was a view of the doctrine of the Epistle to the Galatians, introductory to discourses upon Gal. ii. 19, 20. . . . . This introduction, sum of doctrine, and threefold argument embraced the whole Epistle, which I had thus digested into my discourse, with application of each branch of the argument to the present times and all times; but I was able to deliver only about a half of it, and withal our service reached to within a quarter of two. My evening chapter was the 21st of Genesis, when I felt my mouth opened in a remarkable way to bear testimony to the want of faith in this generation, who would embrace the heavens and the earth, and the truth and majesty of God, within the nutshell of their own intellect, and believe in God not a hair's-breadth beyond their intellectual sight,—which, adopted by children as scholars, would destroy the school—by subjects, would destroy government; and, in short, that these sacred things all hang together, and must sink or swim with faith. . . . . I was much strengthened in this discourse, and in both my prayers. . . . . Mr E—— was there morning and evening. The Lord add that youth to His Church! I travail for him. Farewell, dear Isabella. You cannot have so much pleasure in reading these as I have in writing them. The blessing of the Lord be with my babe—my tender babe. The blessing of the Lord be with her mother—her tempted but victorious mother. . . . .

"*Monday, 7th November.*—Though wearied, my dearest Isabella, with a day of much activity, and afterwards with the exposition of that blessed Psalm, this night's lesson, and now with much discourse and discussion to James P——, whom I like exceedingly, and William Hamilton, all concerning the subordination of the sensual or visible, and the intellectual or knowable, to the spiritual or redeemable (the first giving the typography, the second giving the method, and the last the substance of all true and excellent discourse), I do now sit down

with true spiritual delight to commune with my soul's sweet mate. Yea, hath not the Lord made us for one another, and by His providence united us to one another, against many fiery trials and terrible delusions of Satan? And, as you yourself observed, has He not over again wedded us, far more closely than in any joy, by our late tribulation, and the burial of our lovely Edward, our holy first-born, who gave up the ghost in order to make his father and mother one, and expiate the discords and divisions of their souls? Dear spirit, thou dearest spirit which doth tenant heaven, this is the mystery of thy burial on the wedding-day * of thy parents, to make them for ever one. Oh, and thou shalt be sanctified, God blessing, by such a concord and harmony of soul as hath not often blessed the earth since Eden was forfeited by sin. My wife, this is not poetry, this is not imagination which I write; it is truth, rely upon it, it is truth that lovely Edward hath been the sweet offering of peace between us for ever; and so, when we meet in heaven, he shall be as the priest who joined us,—the child of months being one hundred years old. Let my dear wife be comforted by these thoughts of her true love. I found much sweet meditation upon my bed last night; and when I awoke in the morning He was with me, and I had much countenance of the Lord in my secret devotions; and when I descended found Mr T——, the preacher, and Mr Bull met in the breakfast parlour, and Mr P—— seated in the library. That preacher is very clever, and infinitely prolific in his vein, and that no contemptible one; but volatile and wild as the winds, yet musical in his mirth, and full of heartiness and good will. But he serveth joyaunce of the mind, and has not yoked himself to any workmanship; and I have accordingly exhorted him to be about his Master's work—to get him down into the battle, and take his post. Mr Bull brought me a very sweet frontispiece, which he has executed for Montgomery's *Psalmist*, one of Collins's series. . . . . As usual, his bashful, meek company was very sweet to me.

"When they went, Miss N—— came, who can believe none, and would intellectualize everything; and consequently looks for her religious prosperity in expedients of the intellectual or visible world, or in *means*, as they call them; (but, Isabella, nothing is a means of grace in which Christ is not seen to be present, whence he is called the Mediator or mean-creator) which, I told her, I could no longer indulge her in, by framing my discourse to her subtleties, but would read her the word of God,

* This much-lamented child was buried on the 14th October, the second anniversary of their marriage.

to which, if she framed her mind by faith, then it would be well; but if not, she must utterly perish. After which reading of the 103rd Psalm, being moved in my spirit with love to her, I pronounced over her, without rising, a prayer which made her weep abundantly—tears, I trust, which may by God's grace reap joy hereafter. She says I have demolished all the glory of her building, and she stands as upon a ruin of herself. I say unto you, Miss N——, Christ can alone build up and mould your shattered mind to the similitude of his own mind. You see, my dear, what boldness the Lord is endowing me with. . . . . What clean, black villany, what unwrinkled villany, there was upon those countenances I met in Saffron Hill and Field Lane, on my way to the Bible Society, where, among others, I saw the face of Father Simon, looking with all its eager unrest; and there being nothing of importance to detain me, I came away with the old worthy, and held such discourse with him as the Strand heareth not oft, until we reached the Temple, whither he entered to his business, and I returned to the city to dine with Mr Dinwiddie and Wm Hamilton; and on my way, having found a receiving-house, I committed your letter to the care of the post; but, ah! forgot the blessing or prayer for its safe arrival, so doth the rust of custom corrode the frame of our piety. Life should be a web of piety; custom makes it a web of impiety. My dear, we must be redeemed in all things from wickedness to serve the living God. Having dined with my friends, I proceeded at three to visit Mr David, who had yesterday a relapse, and is this day very low. The surgeon apprehended no danger; but I know not how it is, I fear we are going to lose him. His soul is winged with faith: let it take its flight. He also is my son in the Gospel. I could not see him, but we lifted up our hearts together for his health and salvation. Then I proceeded to Mrs T——; and now, my dear, learn a lesson of spiritual life, and let me learn what I am now to teach thee. This sweet mother, whom I greatly love, said to me, 'All darkness, all darkness; what if it should have been all self-deception?' That is, the Lord was shaking His saint out of the last refuge of Satan, which he takes in the righteousness which hath been wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. As Knox said on his death-bed, 'The enemy has been trying me with representations of the work which has been done by me.' . . . .

"From thence I proceeded to the Session, where we proceeded with good harmony and union, till they came to speak of time; and then I told them they must talk no more to me concerning the ministry of the word, for I would submit to no authority in that matter but the authority of the church, from

which also I would take liberty to appeal if it gainsaid my conscience. I am resolved that two hours and a half I will have the privilege of. Write me your judgment in this matter. . . . . We had another meeting, at seven, of the congregation. . . . . So I returned, and one o'clock sounding in my ears from Pancras church, I bid you farewell for the night, and pray the Lord to bless you, and our little treasure, and her who hath joined herself to our house, and hath a right to the share of its blessings. Farewell, my spouse!

"*Wednesday, 9th November.*—I sit down, my dearest, after a day of languishing and mourning, rather more cheerful and refreshed than I have deserved to be; for, whether from defective sleep or over-fatigue yesterday, I have been very dead and lifeless all day long, until the evening roused me to some spiritual exercises. Satan could not have had this occasion against me, but for my own most blameworthy conduct in preferring man before God in the services of the morning. For, having promised to take James P—— down to Bedford Square to breakfast, I hurried over both my private and family worship. Now this is such infinite irreverence done unto the majesty of heaven, that I know not how any stronger proof of want of faith could be found. . . . When we returned from Mr M——'s, I endeavoured to seek the Lord in my closet, but found Him not. He hid His countenance, and my heart was left to the bitterness of being alone. I took to the reading of the 3rd chapter of Hebrews, in the original, with a view to pasture for my people: and afterwards to the 22nd of Genesis, with the same end in view, of which I have been able to make out eight verses. I wish to read the Sabbath lessons, at least, in the Hebrew, and to make both lessons a diligent study through the week, with Pool's 'Synopsis' before me; and I have besought the Lord, as I do now again beseech Him, that I may continue in this righteous and dutiful custom. In the Hebrew, it would perhaps be an entertainment to your heart to accompany me, that we may not be divided in this study when we meet again. But I forget that you have the dear babe to watch over; for whom, my dear, let our souls be exercised rather than for the dead. Oh, let us wrestle with God for her soul, that she may not be caught away from us at unawares. I wish she were here, that I might in my arms present her to the Lord every morning and evening. Your letter gave me great delight, and came to cheer me in my spiritual mourning. The Lord continue to support your soul, and to be your portion! Oh, how blessed has been thy death, my beloved, to thy parents' souls! thou first-fruits of our union, and peace-offering of our family, dearly-beloved child, who never

frowned on any one, and never fretted, but moaned the approach of that enemy which was to bereave us of thee ! . . . .

" I sought to begin the discourse on Galatians ii. 19, whose object it will be to show that an outward law is always a sign of bondage, and that the inward willingness is liberty, which a Divine indwelling spirit can alone beget and maintain within us. Pray that I may be enabled to handle this mighty theme to the glory of God, and the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom. For it calls upon all that is within me, and I shall have this and the following week to give to it. . . . . Too many cares of philanthropy, dear, are as seductive as any other cares ; it is divinity which alone can sustain philanthropy. But a divine is become like a phœnix. We know one, but he is near in ashes, and who is to arise in his stead, I know not. . . . After leaving the study, Mr P—— and I walked together. . . . . At six, I had the visit of another child of my ministry, Miss Miller, in whom I found a very humble and sweet spirit, thoroughly, as I trust, convinced of sin, and purged of her sin. After conversing and praying with her, I went out to Mr and Mrs Hall, at their own request, to open the subject of the communion to their souls, when I set it forth by the parable of the prodigal son. That at baptism we had obtained our freedom in our Father's house, who ever since had divided to us our portion of gifts, graces, and opportunities, which we had prodigally squandered ; but, taking pity on us, He doth keep open table in His house, in order to welcome every one who hath a longing to return. He breaketh bread and poureth out wine, the body and blood of His Son's sacrifice, for every one who will come, as the prodigal came, heartily repenting, and humbly confessing his sin. This, therefore, is what I desire—the sense of sin, and the faith that it is to be forgiven only through the blood of Christ. For the enlightening of the mind, for the convincing of the heart, and the converting of the whole soul, it is the work of the Holy Spirit, who is the gift of Christ to His weak but faithful disciples. Oh, dearest, how profitable is that mystery of the Trinity to my soul ! The husband and wife heard me with tears. I trust these are tokens for good. The Lord enable them to retain upon their souls those feelings towards Him which they this night expressed to me. By these exercises my spirit was restored. The Lord hath restored my soul, and I was able to comfort the family with the 42nd Psalm, and I trust to encourage my own spirit. . . . . Now, the blessing of the Lord rest upon my wife, and child, and servant this night, who have not separated, I know, without commending me to the Lord ! Thus do we unite our interests on high, and

lay in our proofs and pledges of mutual love with our heavenly Father . . . . . Farewell!

"*Thursday*, 10*th November*, 1825.—I pray the Lord so to quicken my love to my dear wife, and so to move my soul with the spirit of truth and wisdom, as that I shall much comfort and edify her by the words which I am about to write. Yesterday I so wore myself out with the various duties I had to discharge, that I was hardly able to do the offices of family worship, and, in utter inability, forewent my sweet interview of faith with my Isabella; no, not of faith, but of these visible emblems of faith, for the interview of the spirit I truly had with you. . . . . I have fulfilled your commission to Mrs Hall, who received your gift with much thankfulness. Our maid is now gone, and we are a very happy and, I trust, contented household. In the church last night I opened the real contents of the new covenant (Hebrews viii. 10, to the end) to the young communicants, who are about to enter by the proper form to the renewal of it. For you will observe, dearest, that there was a renewal of the covenant when the children of Israel entered into the land of promise, as there is to us: first, the granting it at baptism to the faith of our parents; and again, the renewal of it over the sacrifice of our own faith. Now these contracts are, 1st, the law within, and no longer without, that is, liberty of soul to obey God, instead of restraint of fear; 2nd, the ruling of God over us, and our subjection to Him in all willingness; 3rd, the teaching of His Spirit in all His revelations; 4th, the absolution of all our sinfulness through Christ's atonement. The first being the conversion of our will; the second, the maintenance of our weakness; the third, the enlightening of our knowledge; the fourth, the purging of our conscience from all fear. What an inheritance, my dear wife, is this to which you, and I, and all believers are admitted! Let us enter it, let us enter into it. Why can we not enter into the willingness, the confirmation, the enlightening, the peace of it? We cannot enter in by reason of unbelief. Now encourage one another, I pray you, for the time is short.

"This morning we mustered a goodly company, though it was the stormiest morning almost I remember; three missionaries from the Mission House, our broad-faced Würtemberg friend, so dear to us all, and a countryman, and an East Indian, half-caste, preparing for his return to preach to the Hindoos. They tell me there are at present two of their countrymen at St Petersburgh fulfilling to the letter our Lord's instructions to his disciples. I have a very strong purpose of sending over

to all the Mission Houses copies of my *Orations* for the sake of the youth; and to this effect of ordering Hamilton to send me all that are not sold, and desiring him to transmit the proceeds of the sale which there has been to the widow of Smith. Tell me what you think of this. The German missionaries at Karass soon found out the unproductiveness of Scottish prudence when applied to propagate the Gospel, and are fast recurring to the primitive method on the confines of Persia, where they at present labour. They speak of a great revival in the Prussian kingdom; more than a hundred young preachers have gone forth from the universities to preach the Gospel. The Lord prosper his work! To-morrow a number of young missionaries are to receive their instructions at a public meeting in Freemason's Hall, and they are to set out for Malta some time this month. The Lord is their helper. I took occasion, from the 51st Psalm, to speak to them of the qualifications there referred to. . . . After their departure, I addressed myself to my sweet studies of reading the lessons of the day, and meditating the lessons of Sabbath in the original tongues. . . . Afterwards I betook myself to my lecture on Christ's attendants and sustenance in his ministry, Luke viii. 2, 3, which is a subject of great importance and fruitfulness, if the Lord see it good to open it to me by His Spirit, which I do now earnestly pray. James and I, after dinner (we have now got the wine-cellar open, and I have ordered Hall a bottle of Madeira to strengthen him), went down to Bedford Square, where I had a good deal of profitable conversation with our dear friends. But before I went out I received a parcel, . . in which was a fine lace cap and wrought robe for our dear departed boy; . . . . our darling hath now a more precious robe than can be wrought by the daughters of a duke; yet it is a sweet and honourable token of their love. I have written to tell them whither the object of their love is gone. . . . Our little boy! thou art incorporated with my memory dearly, with my hope thou art incorporated still more dearly. We will come, when our Lord doth call, to thee and to the general assembly of the first-born. Oh, Isabella, I exhort thee to be diligent in thy prayers for thee and me!

"*Friday*, 11*th November*.—I have just dismissed Mrs Hall, my dear Isabella, to set into the study to-morrow morning a slice of bread and glass of water, purposing to keep myself alone for meditation, and I pray the Lord that he would give us both a heart full of divine thoughts and holy purposes. . . . . Mr Hamilton is a great comfort to me; I may say of him, as Paul says of Mark, that he is helpful to me for the ministry,

literally delivering me of all secular cares. But I must proceed in order. When we were at our morning worship, Mr O—— slipped in, with his slow and canny foot, in order to seek introductions to Scotland, which I would not give; for though I am enough satisfied with him for the rule of charity, I have no sufficient evidence upon which to commend him to another. Indeed I would be suspicious of his favour-seeking and power-hunting, if I were not satisfied it is universal, and that he may have caught it by infection, not generated it in his own constitution; but, ah, it is a weakening disease, however caught! When I had dismissed, I read the 3rd chapter of John in the original, and studied the latter half of the 3rd chapter of the Hebrews with a diligent reference to the parallel scriptures; and in studying that chapter it will help you to know that 'even as Moses in all his house' is not to be understood *Moses'* but *God's* house, the house of 'Him who appointed him,' as you will see by referring to the passage in Numbers, of which it is the quotation; the whole argument being to set Moses forth, not as having a house of his own, but as a servant in the house which Christ had ordered, and to which, in due time, He came as the heir to claim and inherit His own. That idea of the Church, under the similitude of a house, is constant in the New Testament, derived, I take it, from the temple, which was a type of the Church; and I have no doubt that 'In my Father's house are many mansions,' means the Church in which he prepared a place for his apostles, by sending to them His Holy Spirit; so that thenceforth they became its foundation-stones. 'We are made partakers with Christ if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end,' refers to Christ's coming in the end to occupy His house, when all His people shall share with Him in His kingdom; which He himself sets forth by the same similitude of a householder who went into a far country, and in the meantime gave his servants their several charges. We are these servants; let us be found faithful, and when He comes we shall be made partakers or sharers with Him. After these studies in divinity, I relieved my mind by reading a portion of the Convocation book which treated of our Lord's respect to those who sat in Moses' seat, presenting this feature of His obedience in very meek and true colours. Oh, how I have offended herein, making myself a judge instead of a minister of the Church! and yet I know not how otherwise to proceed when all things are manifestly so out of square. I do pray earnestly that the Lord would keep me manly in the regulation of the censorious part of my spirit. For I have this day, and immediately after the perusal of the above,

written a lecture upon the simple and unprovided faith in which our Lord made His rounds of the ministry; arguing thence the spirit in which His ministers should stand affected towards the provisions of this life, and should receive them; wherein I have not scrupled to declare the whole counsel of God; but I know not whether in the right spirit.

"This also has occupied me since dinner up to the time of evening prayer, when the Lord opened my mouth to speak of His love to our souls, so that I could see the tears gather in the eyes of my little company. I do hope there is a work of Divine grace proceeding in these servants' hearts. . . . . Oh, Isabella, I have a strong persuasion of the power of a holy walk and conversation, in which, if we continue, we shall save not only our own souls, but the souls of those that hear us; even now there is a strong conviction of that truth brought home to my spirit. For yourself, dear, when you are in darkness and distress, then do not fret, but clothe your spirit in sackcloth, and sit down and take counsel with your soul before the Lord, and study all its deformity, and search into the hidden recesses of its unbelief. It is a rich lesson for humility; it is a season of sowing seed in tears. The Lord permitteth such temptations that we may the more thoroughly see our depravity; and in the midst of our seasons of brightness they come like clouds threatening a deluge, which the rainbow covenant averts from the soul of God's chosen ones. . . . . My dearest, we must soon go to our rest, and our sweet infant also; and perhaps the Lord may not see us worthy to leave any seed on the earth. His will be done. I pray only to be conformed to His will. Now rest in peace, my other part, and thou, sweet link of being betwixt us! The Lord make our souls one! And may He bless with the inheritance of our domestic blessings, spiritual and temporal, our faithful servant, who has joined herself to our house. Fare you all well. The Lord compose your souls to sweet and quiet sleep.

"*Saturday*, 12*th November*.— . . . I am left to my sweet occupation of making my dear Isabella a sharer of the actions of my life and the secrets of my heart; would that they were more valuable for thy sake, my dearest love! This day was devoted to pious offices connected with the memory of our dear boy, that it might be made profitable to the living. But I found not the satisfaction which I expected. I began by reading the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians in the original, hoping to be somewhat raised in my thoughts; but whether I fell away into the criticism and *scholiæ*, from the old Greek fathers, which are in my noble Greek Testament, I know not; but I think I missed the edification of the spirit; Satan is never absent from us; he can

slay as effectually from the letter of God's word, as from the lightest and vainest pleasures of the world. After which I studied the funeral service of the Church, in which office I found some movements of the spirit which I sought. Then I girt myself to my duties, and wrote, first, a letter to my father's house, exhorting them against formality, and testifying to them the nature of a spiritual conversation; then I wrote to M——, manifesting, according to my ability, the evils of self-communion and self-will, and the blessings of communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. I know not how it may be felt by her, but if she should speak of it, assure her it was done faithfully and in love. . . . Thereafter I addressed myself to some reading in my Convocation book and Roman history. . . . . Since tea, I have been busy preparing my discourses, and I do pray that He would bless them. I had much liberty in exhorting my little evening congregation and opening to them the comfortable doctrine of the Divine Providence, and in praying for our souls, and the souls of all men; and now, dearest, twelve o'clock hath rung in my ears, and having exhorted the household to timeous hours on the Sabbath morning, I must not be slack to give the example; and that I may leave room for to-morrow's work, which I trust will be holy and blessed, I part from you with few words, praying the Lord to have you all in His holy keeping. But let me not forget that this day, which I have improved to others, I ought of all to improve the most carefully to Edward's mother. Every twelfth day of the month, my loving and beloved wife, let it be your first thought that your babe is mortal, and that the father of your babe is mortal, and that you yourself are mortal! and every twelfth day of the month, my loving and beloved wife, let it be your last thought that your babe is mortal, and that the father of your babe is mortal, and that you yourself are mortal. Do this that you may swallow up our mortality in the glorious faith of our immortality in the heavens. Farewell, my wife. Dwell for ever with the Lord, my sister saint in Christ; dwell for ever with the Lord, my tender babe, and be blessed of Him, as He was wont to bless such as thee. I pray the Lord to bless all with whom you dwell, thou daughter of Abraham and heir of the promise!

"*Sabbath, 13th November.*—My dear Isabella, I have finished the labours of another Sabbath, with much of the presence of the Lord in the former part of the day, and not so much in the evening. There must have been some want of faith either in the writing or delivery of my discourse, and I have besought the Lord that he would preserve me during this week in a spiritual frame of mind, and move within my soul right thoughts

and feelings for the salvation of my people; and I desire that you would ever on a Sabbath morning pray the Lord to preserve my soul in a spirit of faith and love all the day, and in the evening pray that He would direct my mind to such subjects of meditation and methods of handling them as He will bless. . . . . I have been much exercised this last week with the possibility of some trial coming to me from the resolute stand which I have taken, and will maintain, upon the subject of the liberty of my ministry. For the spirit of authority and rule in the church begins to grow upon me, and I fear much there is not enough of the spirit of obedience in our city churches to bear it. But I am resolved, according as I am taught the duty of a minister of the Gospel, to discharge it, and consider everything that may befall as the will of the Lord. I was telling this to Mr Dinwiddie this morning, for I find, good men, they have all their little schemes, after which they would like to see me play my part, instead of looking to me as one, under Christ's authority, to watch over the church, and to be honoured of the church. The church was crowded both morning and evening; but I am prepared, if the Lord should see it meet to try me here also, and I sometimes think I shall be tried here at some time or other. Now, my notion is, that the Lord is very gracious to me at present, permitting me to be strengthened; that then Satan will have power against me for a season by every form of trial —and, alas! there are too many open rivets in my armour;— but that in the end the Lord, if I abide faithful, will increase me with much honour. . . . . I thank God that I am very strong; and even now (ten o'clock) sleep begins to loose the curtains of my conception, and twilight is settling in my mind. . . . . And now, dearest, I commend you and our little one unto the Lord, and pray that the Lord may bless you and preserve you for a blessing to these eyes.

"*Monday*, 14*th November*.—My dear wife, this has been a day sweetly varied with the good mercies of God, who in various ways hath used His servant to minister unto the comfort of His people, which I shall now set forth to you in order, being full of gladness and thankfulness. In the morning we had the Psalm of our Lord's humiliations (lxix.), and the chapter of Job's most pathetic lamentation and divine confidence in his Redeemer (xix.), upon which I have been able to reflect more during the day by what I have seen, than I was able to reflect unto my family, though I sought for words of exhortation. We were, besides our own, Mr J——, a friend introduced by Pears; Rev. Mr Cox, of the Church of England, a calm, pious, and charitable man, whom I met at Brighton; and Sottomayor, the

soldier. I had to withstand the radicalism and village-town conceit of the first, who cut all questions with a keen blade of self-conceit, but neither of wit nor understanding, in which I was greatly assisted by the wisdom of Mr Cox, who, having travelled, was able to speak with authority; and he delighted me with one declaration, that in the Catholic churches of Italy he had never heard a sermon (though he had heard many) which breathed of saints' days and other mummeries, but always of solid theology, deep piety, and much unction, and that he had met with many whom he believed most spiritual. My dear, I have often more concern about the issue of the intellectual forms of our own Church, which tend to practical and theoretical infidelity, than of the sensual forms of the Romish Church, which do tend to superstition, and still preserve a faith, though it be of the sense. Anyway, I give God praise that either with us or with them He preserveth a seed. When they departed, poor Sarah Evans came to me, troubled in her conscience, poor girl, that she had not confessed to me all her sins; and she was about to open all her history in time past, when I interrupted her, and would not allow her to proceed. Poor thing! I pity much her wandering mind, still timorous and startled like one that had been lost, and not sure of having found the way. I think I must consult the elders about her. It is a hard case; she is truly spiritual, but has a certain instability and flutter in her judgment. . . . After her came a poor woman, the sister of Mr M'W—— (formerly of Dumfriesshire), who has been a prodigal for the last twenty-one years in a far distant land of the West Indies, having followed into dissipation a dissipated husband, buried ten children, left one, and now returned *in formâ pauperis*,—left upon the shore by the good Samaritan, who provided her in a fortnight's lodging, expecting that in that time her brother, to whom he wrote, would be eager to relieve her. But her brother seems more ashamed of her than sorry for her, and dreads her return to Scotland, and had written a letter, entreating me to get her into an hospital, which I found on my arrival. I liked its spirit ill, even before I had seen her, and wrote that I would not recommend to any hospital the sister of a Scotch clergyman in good circumstances, except she should be wholly abandoned. Still he writes me, inclining to the finding an asylum for her in London, and wishing me to see her, which this day I appointed by letter, for she lives all the way at Shadwell, and is disabled of her side by a palsy. And she came,—a poor picture of the prodigal, humbled and penitent, and longing for her brother's bosom as ever the prodigal did for his father's. 'I should never be off my knees, I think, if I could

but see John, and partake of his prayers and counsels; the Lord would bring peace to my soul.' And she wept; and she very sorely wept when I read her parts of her brother's letter, but confessed to her past sinfulness; and before she went away her last words were, with many tears, 'And tell him I am an altered woman.' . . . . So I sat down and wrote for the widow, and rebuked my brother sharply, and told him he ought to make for her a room around his fireside. What may be the issue I know not; but my part, God helping me, is to help the prodigal widow. . . . .

"Then I went forth to visit Mrs P——, as I set down in my letter; but be thankful that letter went not to the Dead Office, for giving a glance to the object of my affections, whose name I thought fairly inscribed, I found that it was fairly blank, and had to get pen and ink at the receiving-house. James P—— (who is very great in the highest mathematics, and reads La Place's Calculus of Generating Functions which that greatest of calculators has applied to probabilities) immediately told me that La Place observed, to show how constant causes are, that the number of such undirected letters put into the Paris post-office was year by year, as nearly as possible, the same. When I went up to Mr P——'s shop I found his sister standing in it, and she took me up to her mother's sick-room, saying little or nothing by the way. And her mother took me by the hand, and said, 'The Lord hath sent you this day, for my Andrew is cast into prison.' . . . . Andrew, you must know, is betrothed to a young lady whom he has been the instrument of converting to the Lord, and when he left S——'s, being unresolved what to do with his little capital, which could not meet his present business, his betrothed's uncle said, 'Get your bills discounted, and you shall not want for money;' for they had always said that he was to have £500 on the wedding day, and £500 afterwards. To this the servant of the Lord trusting, sunk his money in his lease, trusting to have his floating bills met by his friend, who, growing cool because Andrew did not instantly succeed, withdraws his promises, and leaves our friend in deep waters; and deals with his niece to send poor Andrew all his letters, and to request hers in return. This took place on Friday, and this day, at breakfast, two of the officers of justice, at the instance of a creditor, came, and he went with them. Thus was his mother left, and thus I found her all but overcome. I comforted her as I could, and prayed with her as I could, and saw that something was to be done as well as said. So coming down, I sat down to write in the back shop, while his sister sought some clue to the creditor's address,

that I might find the prison. . . . . So I proceeded by Cary Street, and, after diligent search, found Andrew in a house of which the door is kept always locked, seated with three men who seemed doleful enough—one resting his forehead on his hands, another reclining on a sofa, and the third contemplating, half miserably, half sottishly, a pint of porter. Andrew was close by the chimney corner. We communed together, and he was as calm and cheerful as Joseph, having Joseph's trust; and of a truth, yesterday, he seemed to his own household lifted above himself. And he had tasted my evening discourse upon the minister's wayfaring, raven-brood life to be very good. And it is marvellous, we concluded our service with the 34—37 verses of the 37th Psalm,—as if the Lord would encourage me with respect to that service of which I desponded to you last night. While I talked with dear Andrew, not knowing but the others were the watchful officers of justice, he upon the sofa struck his forehead and started to his feet with a maniac air, crying, 'Oh God, the horrors are coming upon me!' and wildly, very wildly, strode through the room; so that I was standing to my arms, lest he might be moved of Satan against me for the words which I was speaking to Andrew. And he with his hand upon his head wept, and the other man would comfort with 'patience'—'philosophy.' But the wounded man continued to burst out, and stride on, and beat his forehead. Whence we gathered that he had been there for a whole month, daily expecting releasement, but none came, every message worse than another; and ever and anon he spoke of his wife. Then, when his fit was over, in which he talked of people putting an end to themselves, and of the fits of horror which broke his sleep, I addressed words of comfort to him, and prevailed to soothe him; so that, when I came away, he said, 'It were well for us to receive many such visits, Sir.' But I must break off—the night wears very late, and I am getting too much moved. The Lord bless, for the night, my loving and beloved wife, and the Lord bless our baptized babe—our little daughter of the Lord!

"*Tuesday*, 15*th*.—Andrew, who realized to me the idea of Joseph in prison, had come away in great haste, and omitted to take his Bible with him, which I supplied with my far-travelled and dear companion, now bound firmly as at the first. Those storms which I encountered upon the Yarrow mountains melted the cover of my writing-desk, and firmly bound the loose back of my Bible. Leaving Andrew, I proceeded to my engagement at six o'clock in Fleet Market, which was to visit Miss M——, and her brother and sister, who live with her. Their father dead, their mother in Essex, and two married

brothers in town, so estranged from her by selfishness and worldliness, that 'if five shillings would save me from death, I hardly think I could muster it amongst all my relations.' Oh, what a blessing to Scotland are her family ties! Families here are only associations under one roof for a few years, to issue in alienation and estrangement: I am grieved at my heart to witness it. But she abides strong in the Lord. . . . . Her brother gave wonderful ear to me. My words entered deep, for he wept almost continually, and was much overpowered; and I do trust in the Lord that the lad may be brought to a more obedient and loving spirit towards his sister. Having finished a very sweet visitation, to which there came in an old woman, and a boy about to proceed to North America, whom I also exhorted, I hastened to Mrs P——'s, in order to set her mind, and especially her imagination, at rest, which would be conjuring a thousand ideal frights about a prison. Which having done with much consolation to my own spirit, I called as I passed at Bedford Square to see if anything had happened untoward, but found that all was well. . . . . Mr Scoresby was still sitting, and after I had taken a cup of tea, we came on our ways together, enjoying much delightful discourse. The Lord is opening his mind wonderfully to the right apprehension of the ministerial office. I arrived not at home till about ten o'clock, and assembled the family for worship; and after writing the above, I went to bed and dreamt a dream of sweet thoughts—that I was sitting at Jesus's feet and learning the way to discharge my office, having only six days to hear from the Divine Instructor, at which time He was to remove from the earth.

"I was much refreshed by the sweet thoughts of the night, and arose very cheerful; and while the family was at worship, Mr Scoresby and Mr Hamilton came in, whom I had invited on purpose to meet one another. Our morning was passed in sweet discourse, and afterwards I opened to Mr Scoresby, in my own study, many of my views concerning the Church: into some he could enter, and into others not. But he is growing richly in divine knowledge, and I praise the Lord for his sake. We prayed together before he went away, and I invited him when he came back to make his home with us. . . . . Then I addressed myself to my discourse on the bondage of law, and having wrought that vein till I was wearied, I betook myself to the correcting of another proof, and had gone over it once, and was about concluding the second reading, when a letter from Wm Hamilton announced that Mr David was much worse, and a few hours might terminate his life. Thereupon I left all, and proceeded to the house of death. On my way I met Mr Simon

proceeding to Bath in order to build up certain churches there who have besought his presence. We commended each other to the Lord, and took our several ways. I found Mr David still living, and some faint hopes of amendment; but I am prepared for *the worst*, which I doubt not is *the best*. . . . . I wrote a letter to Willie, who is at Norwich at school, opening the afflicting intelligence to him as best I could. . . . . I returned in time to get my proof-sheet finished for the post; since which I have been labouring up the hill with my lecture upon the pious women who ministered unto Christ; when, at nine o'clock, a lady came in to enjoy the privilege of our prayers. At the church on Wednesday evening a sorrowful lady asked me if it was true that I read prayers at my own house and permitted people to come. I said, at family worship I delight to comfort and encourage the hearts of all who are present, and if you come on a spiritual errand you shall be welcome. So this night she came, and hath opened to me her sorrows. Three months ago she lost her only boy, after three years' illness, during which she watched him continually; and now she is alone in the world, with a memory haunted and a heart stunned and broken, knowing little of the spiritual, and dwelling much in the imagination. His sufferings had been extreme, and his death frightful; and his poor mother, not more than your years, is now alone in this great city, which to her is a great desert. . . . . Her husband was a Sicilian, and died before the boy was born. . . . . She wanted to know if she would know her son in heaven. I could have wept for her, but I saw she needed another treatment, and therefore rebuked, but with kindness, her imaginations, and showed her the way to the spiritual world, whither I pray the Lord to lead her. . . . . The Lord enable me to direct her in the way of peace. . . . . Thus another day has passed with its various incidents and various blessings. I have been oft in it enjoying near communion with God, and oft I have been cold and lifeless. When shall I be wholly with the Lord? I do desire His abiding presence—the light of His countenance. . . . . Now may the Lord be the canopy over your head, and over the head of the babe, this night, and over mine, enveloping us in the everlasting arms!

"*Wednesday*, 16*th November*.—Our dear, dear friend is no more. He departed about five o'clock, in exactly that frame of spirit which, above all others, I would wish to die myself in. . . . . In the five weeks of his sore affliction his robust and zealous spirit has had the meekness of a little child, and as a little child he was taught of the Spirit in a wonderful way. . . . . The propitiation of Christ and his own un-

worthiness were his chief meditations, and continued so to the last. During that time a worldly care has not crossed his lips. His soul has been full of love to all, and of great, great affection to me. I know not that I have one left who loved me as he did. . . . . He accompanied me to the ship, with Mr Hamilton, when I came to see you and little Edward; now he is gone in London, and Edward lies in his cold grave in Scotland; and I am left, and you are left, whom I feared lest I should lose; and left we are, dearest, to bear fruit unto God, and fruit we will bear unto God, being cleansed by the word of Christ, and supported by the juices and nourishment of the Vine, and dressed by the hands of our heavenly Father. Let us watch and exhort one another, as I now do you, my dearest wife, to much frequent private communion with God. This was what our friend had resolved to apply himself to with more diligence than ever if it had been the will of the Father to spare him. About three o'clock, I received a message from Wm Hamilton that he was fast fading away, and had expressed a wish to see me. I had proposed going about two hours after; these two hours would have lost me the sweetest parting in my life—my child first born unto Christ, at least who is known to me. I found him far gone in breathlessness, but lively in hearing, quick in understanding, and full of the Spirit of life. He stretched out his hand to me; his other was stretched to his wife, on the other side of the bed. . . . I prayed with him, and afterwards continued, at intervals, to supply his thoughts with pregnant scriptures. I repeated to him the 23rd Psalm, in which he was wont to have such delight. This revived him very much, and he uttered several things with a grave, full, deep voice, interrupted by his want of breath. 'My whole hope, trust, and dependence is in the mercy of God, who sent His Son to save the meanest.' . . . . I saw death close at hand, and drew near and took his hand. His breathing deepened, and became more like distinct gasps. And it failed, and failed, until his lungs did their office no more, and he died without a struggle of a limb, or the discomposure of a muscle—his mouth open as it had drawn its last breath—his eye fixed still on me; and we stood silent, silent around him. Then Mr Bedome closed his eyelids. I know not why they do so. I loved to look on Edward's. Dear, lovely corpse of Edward, what a sweet tabernacle was that over which thy mother and I wept so sadly! My much-beloved child, my much-cherished, much-beloved child, dwell in the mercies of my God, and the God of thy mother! We

will follow thee betimes, God strengthening us for the journey. I had still an hour to sit with Mrs David, and to write sweet William and his grandfather. She was comforted, and I left her tranquil. Mr Hamilton, who is much affected, was seated below, in the dining-room, and we came to the church together, when I discoursed from the 24th and 25th verses of the 14th chapter of John, and made known to them the good intelligence that our brother had had a good voyage so far as we could follow him, or hear tidings from him. Every one seemed deeply affected, and all whom I talked with were sensibly rejoiced. . . . . Thus another of my flock has gone to the Chief Shepherd. . . . Andrew P—— brought me up my Bible, having been delivered last night, and giving thanks unto God. I love him much; his mother, also, is better. So that the Lord hath shined from behind the cloud, ... James P—— is a very sweet companion. Hall is still weakly. The rest are well. I fight a hard fight, but let me never forsake private communion, or I perish. The Lord bless you and our dear babe. I wish I were refreshed with a sight of you both.

"*Thursday, two o'clock.*—I have had such a conversation with one of my congregation, a medical man, upon the subject of what I would call 'the theology of medicine,' as made me sorry you were not present to hear it. But in good time, when you are restored to me, you shall hear him often; for he is both a gentleman, a man of science—the true science of nature, and a Christian. He discoursed upon infants, and the treatment of infants, so well and wisely, that I could not let this letter go without noting to you one or two things.*. . .

"*Thursday, 17th Nov.*—My dear Isabella, nothing is of such importance as to have a distinct view of the end of all our labours under the sun—our studies, our conversations, our cares, our desires, and whatever else constitutes our being. For though many of these seem to come by hazard, without any end in view, believe me, my dear, that every habit arose out of an end, either of our own good or some other good desirable in our eyes; and that the several acts contained under that label go to strengthen that end which it carried with it from the beginning. Now, dearest, our one, only end should be the glory of God, and our one, only

* Here follows a minute record of the advice he had just received, reported with the most grave and anxious particularity, but concluding thus: "To these rules give no more confidence than seems to your own mind good, and put your trust in the providence and blessing of Almighty God."

way of attaining that end by the fulfilment of His will; and the only means of knowing that will is by the faith of His word; and the only strength for possessing it is the love, desire, and joy which are begotten in us by the Holy Ghost. Therefore be careful, my dear sister in Christ, to occupy your thoughts and cares with some form of the divine revelation, and to have before the eye of your faith some divine end, present or distant,—yea, both present and distant; and then shall you have communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ from morning to evening. This attempt, this succeed in, not by the force of natural will, which will make such a hirpling, hobbling gait of it, but by the practical redemption of your Saviour, which will by degrees clear you of the former slough, and feather your callow nakedness, and give you wings with which to mount up into the exalted region of life. Have ever in view the glory of God, and ever seek help to it by prayer, and the Lord himself will lead you into the way. These thoughts occurred to me as I came home from Bedford Square, where I took dinner with our dear friends, and I resolved I would write them for your sake. I spent the morning in study upon the help which women may afford and have afforded in the Church, and have brought my lecture nearly to a close; so that I have to-morrow and next day for the great theme of legal bondage on which I have entered. I would, and earnestly pray that I might, keep my thoughts during study intent upon the glory of God and the promotion of Christ's kingdom. And it were not dutiful if I did not acknowledge that the Lord is bringing me into a region of nearer communion. But I cannot tell what huskiness there is about my heart, and in my discourse what seeking after intellectual or imaginary forms. Oh, that I could feel the very truth, and rejoice with the free joy of its inheritance! During my study, Dr Wilkins came in, and discoursed to me for about an hour with a simplicity and beauty which ravished me. If he do not prove visionary upon further acquaintance—if his practical understanding be perfectly sound, then he is the greatest accession to my acquaintance since I became acquainted with Mr Frere, and will prove to me, in all that respects the chemistry of the bodily constitution, what other leaders have been to me in respect to the mental and the spiritual. The Lord hath showed me such marvellous kindness, in respect of teachers, that I cannot enough praise Him. . . . The object of his discourse was to prove that nature had no tendency to any disease, but wholly the

reverse; and that, were it not our ignorance and perversity, we would come to our full age, and drop into the grave as a shock of corn in its season; and he began his demonstration from the condition of the child. . . . There was much more he had to discourse of, but I told him I had enough for the present, and would hear him another time. He is a man of fine manners and a sweet nature,—of continued acknowledgment of God and blame of man. . . . . Now, dearest, I have put all this down for your sake, that you might meditate upon it, and make the use of it which you judge best. The man you will like exceedingly, that I know full well, because we are of one spirit now, or fast growing into one spirit—praised be the mercy of our God. . . . . The Lord be gracious to you and all the house. I pray for you and baby, I oft think, with more earnestness than for myself, which is sentiment, and not faith. The Lord edify us in one most holy faith; and Mary also, whose salvation I earnestly desire. Amen.

"*Friday*, 18*th*.—My dear Isabella, there is no point of wisdom, human or divine, so carefully to be attended to, for one's own good, or for the knowledge and good of others, as the spirit which men are of. For the spirit draws after it the understanding, and determines the views which men take of every subject, in the world of sight or in the world of faith. Some people remain under the spirit of their minds, and become intensely selfish. But the social principle leads the several spirits to congregate together for mutual defence and encouragement. First of all, there is the Holy Spirit, whose communion constitutes the true Church of Christ, and you may be sure their opinions will be orthodox doctrine, charitable sentiment, sweet, patient temper, and, in short, transcripts of Christ Jesus our Lord. Then there is the worldly spirit, which is one in respect of its opposition to the former, and intolerance of all its opinions; but in respect to itself, is divided into many, its name being Legion. Of these I find to prevail at present the following:—1st, Around you in Scotland there is the spirit of the *human understanding*, of which scepticism of all things that cannot be expressed with logical precision is the characteristic, and an utter abhorrence of all mystery; whereas, as you know, to the holy spirit of simplicity everything is a mystery unfolding itself more and more. There is also the spirit of self-sufficiency, which characterizes our countrymen above measure. With us we have the spirit of expediency, which calculates what it can foresee, and accounts all beyond to be void and unreclaimed

chaos; it is utterly fruitless of any principle self-directing in the human soul, and would make man wholly under the influence of outward things. Of this class Owen is the fool. About the universities of England is the spirit of antiquity, which prizes what is recondite and difficult of discovery, and runs out into Egyptian expeditions to the pyramids and the tombs. And amongst the common people there is, in direct opposition to this, the spirit of radicalism, which hath no reverence for antiquity, or indeed for anything but its own projections. In the Church here there is the spirit of formality, which often ascends into very high regions of beauty and comeliness, but wants the living, acting, confirming principle—is but an Apollo Belvedere or a Venus de' Medici after all,—not a living, acting, self-directing principle. I have not time nor strength to open the subject philosophically, but I have said enough to lead your meditations to it, which is all that I desire. For observe you, my dear, that if you be of the right spirit, all things will right themselves in the eyesight of your mind. Hence the *Holy* Spirit is called also the spirit of *truth*. We do not get right by conning our opinions back over again, but we change our opinions, as we do our dress, from a change in our spirit. Therefore these are often not hypocrites, but rash men, who are seen so suddenly to change their sides. And true conversion draws with it an alteration of all our opinions; and conversion is properly defined as a change of spirit. How often do people say, It was all true he said, but spoken in a bad spirit. Now, if you wish to be right, seek communion with the Holy Spirit; and if you wish to know whom you ought to listen to, by what manner of spirit he is of, try the spirits whether they be of God. Milton could not say, Jesus is the Son of God, because he would not yield to the Holy Spirit, but preferred the spirit of radicalism; and as no one can know the Father but he to whom the Son revealeth Him, so no one knoweth the Son but he to whom the Spirit revealeth Him. And what is meant by having right opinions, or being wise, but to know the Son who is truth? And much more remains, which I may perhaps write hereafter.

"I gave God thanks for your letter, and for the answer of my prayers that you continued to stand fast in the Lord. With respect to your journey, you will easily reach Dumfries by posting it; and I think you ought to take the road by Biggar, Thornhill, and the Nith, as being the more pleasant, and I think, if anything, the more sheltered of the two; although, in that respect, both are bleak enough; . . . from

Annan you had better take the way by Newcastle, and thence to Mr Bell's, of Boswell, which I understand to be within seven miles of York, and I would meet you there. . . . From Annan you will bring me two or three pairs of a shoe of a passing good form for my foot. Nothing has occurred to me to-day worth mentioning. I have enjoyed the presence of God beyond my deservings. I preached to Mr N——'s people, and recognize in them improvement as I hope; *much* in him. There was one idea which occurred to me worth writing. How vain is it for man to trust in God's mercy, when His own Son, though He cried hard for it, could find none, but had to drink the cup of justice! I am weary. The Lord be with you all!

"*Saturday*, 19*th November*.—I am so fatigued, dear Isabella, that I dare not venture to write; but will not retire to rest without inserting, upon this record of my dearest thoughts, a husband's and a father's blessing upon his dear wife and child.

"*Sabbath*, 20*th November*.—I have reason this night again to bless the Lord for His goodness to His unworthy servant, for I have been much supported, and have had great liberty given me to wrestle with the souls of the people; but I want much the grace of wrestling with the Lord for their sake. I feel daily drawn, like the prophet Daniel, to some great and continued act of humiliation and earnest supplication for the Church, but Satan hindereth me. And yet I doubt not the Lord will work in me this victory, and that by your help I shall yet be able to wait upon the Lord night and day, and to weep between the altar and tabernacle for the souls of the people. Indeed, I have already planned that when the Lord restores you to my sight (in spirit we are never parted), we shall pass an hour of every day, from four till five, in our own room, with no presence but the presence of God, which we will earnestly entreat: and we will rest from our great labours that hour, and meditate of our everlasting rest. Before entering upon this day's labours, I will look back upon yesterday, that you may be informed of one or two things which will be pleasant to your ear. The death of our friend David hath wrought wonderfully for good with us all, so that men busy with the world have wept like children; and all have, I think, had the spiritual seasoning intermingled with the natural feeling. It wrought upon me in the way of greater earnestness of spiritual communion; and I think yesterday morning, in the visions of the night, I was conscious of the sweetest enjoyments of the soul I ever knew

There was no vision presented to my sight in my dream, but there was a sense of deeper meaning and clearer understanding given to our Lord's parting discourse, which filled me with a spiritual delight; a light of spiritual glory that was unspeakably mild and delightful. I awoke full of thanksgiving and praise, and bowed myself upon my bed, and gave thanks, and arose to my labours. I break off for worship. The Lord be in the midst of us!

"In reading the last half of the 16th chapter of John, I was struck with the 23rd and 24th verses, which show us why the Lord's prayer was not concluded in Christ's name —because he was not Intercessor and High Priest till after His death. He was perfected, that is, consecrated (for the word for consecration was then perfecting), by sufferings. In the days of His flesh He had no mediatorial power, but was conquering it to Himself and His Church; and therefore He called upon them to rejoice that He was to go away. Now to return. All the day long I continued in study, with walks in the garden and relaxations of history, until after two o'clock, when I bore Mr P—— company to Bedford Square. . . . . Thence I proceeded to the house of affliction. . . . . Now I come to the labours, the blessed labours, of the Sabbath. This morning I awoke at six, but was too weary to rise till eight; and having gone over my sermon, with my pen in my hand, to bring it to very truth as nearly as I know it, I went to church with Mr Dinwiddie, who enters cordially with me into prayer, and is desirous of a more spiritual discourse than when you used to walk with him. After psalms and prayer, in which I had no small communion, we perused the 4th of Hebrews. . . . . Then I commenced my discourse on Gal. ii. 14, upon the bondage of law, opening the whole subject of justification by faith, upon which I intend to discourse at large; and I presented them first with a view of the dignity of the law, both outward in the state and inward in the soul. . . . . (But it has struck twelve; the Lord bless thee and the child, and rest us this night in the arms of His love and mercy, so as we may arise as to a resurrection of life against to-morrow! Amen.) To-morrow is come, and I am still in the land of the living to praise and glorify my Creator and Redeemer; which having done according to my weakness, I sit down to my pleasant labour, after many incidents which must form part of my next despatch. Then showing them the Charybdis of licentiousness upon the other side of the fair way, into which Antinomians and other loose declaimers against the law did

carry miserable souls, and where also superstition and Methodism did bind them in bare bondage after they had seduced them from the wholesome restraints of law, into which law they ought to have breathed the spirit of true obedience—I concluded by entreating their prayers that I might be enabled to handle this vast subject with power, and love, and a sound mind (which I again beseech of you also). . . . . .

"In the evening I was feeble in prayer, to begin with, no doubt from want of faith; but the Lord strengthened me towards the close, otherwise I think I should not have had heart to go on with the service, I felt so spirit-stricken. . . . . My lecture was upon the ministry of women in their proper sphere in the church, which I drew out of the Scriptures by authority; and by the same authority limited and restrained from authority, either in word or in discipline, to the gentle and tender ministry of love, and devotion of goods and personal services, which afforded me a sweet and gracious topic to descant upon, in defence of female liberty, and emancipation from worldly and fashionable prudential laws and tyrannies of decorum, false delicacy, and other base bondages; all which I set off with the historical illustrations of woman's vast services, martyrdoms, shelter of the persecuted, care of the poor, to the seeming conviction of the people; and concluded with a summary of a Christian woman's duties in her various relations; and insisted upon them, as they were members of my church, to be helpful to me, or else I saw no prospect of any growth of communion in the midst of us. . . . . Dearest, I have set forth many things in this letter for your meditation. They are seeds of thought (rather) than thoughts; the *spirit* of truth (rather) than the *doctrines* of truth. Think on these things, and meditate them much, and the Lord give you understanding in all things. For our babe we can do nothing but pray unto the Lord, and *cease from anxiety, living in faith;* and *cease from anxiety, living in faith.* . . . . .

"*Monday*, 21*st November*, 1825.—May the Lord of His great mercy fill my soul with the fulness of love to my dear wife; that, as Christ loved the Church, I may love her, and in like manner manifest with all gracious words my unity of soul with her soul; that we may be one as Thou, our Creator, didst intend man and woman to be from the beginning. This day, dearest, hath been to me a day of much and varied activity, which, being full of reflection and conflict, I shall recount in order. After good rest, which, by the blessing of God, my wearied head doth constantly enjoy, I arose about

eight, and, being outwardly and inwardly apparelled, I came down to fulfil the will of God, whatever it might be, and found Mr M——, the artist, and Mr S——, also an artist, of whom I wrote to you, as being one of my communicants, with whom and the family, having worshipped the God of our salvation, while breakfast was arranging in the other room by good Mrs Hall, Miss W—— and another lady came to wait upon me, whom I went to see. The lady is a Mrs S——, dwelling in the city, who has been much blessed by my ministry, and was brought to it in this wonderful way, as she told it me from her own lips. She had been much tried by a worthless husband, of whom you know there are so many in this tie-dissolving city; and in the midst of her sorrowful nights she dreamed a dream: that she was carried to a church, of which the form and court, even to the trees which grew over the wall, were impressed upon her mind; and there she heard a minister, whose form and dress, to the very shape of his gown, was also impressed upon her, who preached to her from these words: 'Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.' This she communicated to one of her comforting friends, to whom, describing the gown, she answered that he must be a Scotch minister who was intended by the vision, for they are the only people who wear that kind of gown. She had already heard Dr Manuel and Dr Waugh, but was sure they answered not to the figure of the vision; but, as she passed a window, she saw a print of me, and was impressed with the resemblance. Heretofore she had been deterred from coming near me by the crowd, but now she resolved some evening to come; and, having taken a friend's house by the way, they strongly gainsayed her purpose, and would have taken her elsewhere with them, and all but prevailed. This detained her beyond the hour, and, when she returned, our psalm and prayer were over, and I was naming the subject of lecture, and the first words that fell upon her ears were the words of her dream: 'Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.' She stood in the midst of a crowd, hardly able to stand, and beheld and heard all which had been revealed to her in the visions of the night. . . . Is not this very marvellous, dear Isabella, and very gracious, that the Lord should comfort His people by such a worm as I am? I exhorted her to abide steadfast, and to come again and see me.

"When breakfast was over, I brought Mr S—— with me into the library, whose heart, I perceived, was full of some matter, who told me, with an artlessness and alarm which

showed his happy ignorance of our town infidelity, that a cousin of his had, in the course of religious conversation, declared his disbelief of Jesus being the son of David, and disputed the genealogies, and had maintained that in Joshua's time they were but poor geographers, otherwise they would never have alleged that the sun stood still. I was at pains to instruct him, and to teach him the subtle arts of the tempter, but he concluded by saying that it was not for himself, but for his cousin, that he was concerned, and the big tear filled his eye when he said it. I entreated him to bring his cousin some night at our hour of prayer, and I would do my endeavour to set him right. Now I had received, this very morning, a letter from one, Gavin H——, a poor infidel, craving that I would preach a discourse upon the character of God, which he could not understand to be both merciful and vindictive; and I had received two other letters, one with a pamphlet, craving help of me against the infidel Taylor, who is poisoning the City at such a rate; and having likewise been entreated by two men to attend a meeting in John Street Chapel upon the subject of the District Society for evangelizing the Poor, I resolved to attend, though somewhat against my intention, considering that these things, put together, were a sort of call of Providence. Having dismissed Mr S——, I had communion with Mr M——, whom Mr A—— had been in much fear about lately, lest he should be falling back, through the love of a young woman, and the companionship of her family, who were not spiritual. To this subject, introducing myself gently, modestly, and tenderly, I came and spoke upon it with feeling, as having been in like manner tried;—for in what way have I not been tempted, and alas! overcome in all?. . . . .

"Then, being left alone, I sought to relieve my mind by perusing the history of those wonderful instruments of God, the Roman people, not without prayer that the Lord would interpret the record of His providence to my soul. And I think that I was edified in it, until I had gathered strength to finish your letter, which Brightwell interrupted me in, to whom I revealed all my convictions of the spirits that were abroad in the world, and which were defacing the glory of the Church: the radical spirit among the Dissenters, the intellectual spirit in the Scottish Churches, the spirit of expediency among the Evangelicals. He could not see along with me throughout, but he saw more than most men I converse with. Do pray that the Lord may enable me clearly to discern truth, and steadfastly to bear testimony to it! It is a

Jesuitical spirit that is opposing Christ among the Methodists. And these four spirits are so weakening the being of the Church, and corrupting the life which is faith, that, though their numbers may increase, it will still be true, 'When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?' . . . .

"I had engaged to dine with Mr H—— at four o'clock. . . . I knew not that anything was waiting me there. But where is not the minister of the Lord wanted, in this distressed, imprisoned, and rebellious earth? The old man was ill, and they had been forced to bleed him. I went in to see him on his bed, and would have prayed with him, but he professed he was not able to hear me. Ah, Isabella, I fear for that old man: I greatly fear his soul is asleep, and will not awake. Make your prayer for him, for he also shall be required at your husband's hand. There are two Miss F——s, cousins of the family, come to spend the winter, who talked much like the young women of Edinburgh, chattering a vain palaver about ministers, and music, and organs, with which I would have nothing to do. But, after tea, I began to talk to them all, concerning the things of their peace, and was led by Mrs H——'s questions to unfold the judicial blindness to which men are at length shut up, and to open the whole matter of our dependence upon the Father, which was mightily confirmed by the first half of the 17th chapter of John, which is a marvellous acknowledgment of the Father's sovereignty. I pray you to read it and learn humility, self-emptying humility, and profound nothingness in your prayers. They all wept, the religious belles as well as the rest; and a young nephew, half-caste, about to sail for India, wept with a very full heart, after I had prayed with them all. I trust that family is growing in grace, and I fear they have long abidden formalists. Remember this one thing, my Isabella, that we who have believed are by covenant to be brought into the full inheritance, but according to the Lord's time and proportion; but surely as He hath sworn we shall inherit, therefore abide waiting, abide waiting (how long did He wait for us!), waiting in perfect faith of being led in.

"I took the John Street Church by the way, and heard them deliberating about an expedient to meet Taylor's blasphemous tract, that is soon to be published. They are very busy, those enemies of the Lord. He cannot bear it long. They are carrying the people like a stream away from God. But I told them it was not by the expedient of tract-writing or circulating, or controversial work, but by manifestation

of the truth to the conscience, that they were to prevail; and that, when they found the people upon that ground, they should answer them with a caveat, that the matter at issue was not there, still giving them a reason with meekness and fear; but shift the ground as fast as possible, not because the ground was not tenable, but because the kingdom was to be contended for elsewhere. That the teachers ought to assemble to make themselves masters of the infidel's fence, in order to interpose their shield against his poisoned arrows, but with the other hand they should feed the poor captive, and nourish him into strength to fight himself. They heard and believed me. But I came away, entreating the Lord to make me a man in the breach against these sons of Belial, and that I was willing to die if He would spare His inheritance from these fiery flying serpents of infidel notions, which have fallen in upon this central congregation of Israel. Tell your father to be on his post, and to tell his brethren to look to their arms, they know not how insecure their citadel is. Henry Drummond was in the chair; he is in all chairs—I fear for him. His words are more witty than spiritual; his manner is *spirituel*, not grave. . . . . Then I came home, and immediately there gathered a pleasant congregation, ... to whom, with my family, I addressed the word of exhortation, and opened the 103rd Psalm, that psalm of psalms, and our passage in order was Luke xiv., verse 25. How appropriate to these communicants, but oh, Isabella, how sublime! None but God durst have uttered such an abrupt apostrophe to a multitude of men; and no multitude of men would have borne it but from a manifest God. But how contemptible a comparison of unresolved professors—savourless salt, neither good for the field of the Church nor for the dunghill of the world! I pray you to consider this passage—it was more fertile to my soul than I have now strength to tell. The ladies went their ways, and left the two young men, with whom having conversed in the study, I found to be of a righteous spirit, and pressing into the kingdom. . . . . These things rejoice me. The Lord enriches me with comfort. Blessed be His name! Blessed be His holy name! His thrice holy name be blessed for ever and ever!

"And now, dear, I am wearied, having fulfilled many gracious offices, and having had a breathing of the Spirit on them all, and on this not less than the others, my worthy wife. That thou and ours, and the house where thou dwellest, may be blessed of our God for ever and ever!

"*Tuesday*, 22*nd*.—That subtle Cantab, with his logic, has almost robbed my Isabella of her tribute of love, he has so exhausted me. In the morning we were alone, and I arose much refreshed with sleep, and, after worship and breakfast, addressed myself to the work of meditating the 5th chapter of the Hebrews in the original, which is so full of tender humanity. To this I added, in the garden, some reading on the high priest's office, in Godwin's 'Moses and Aaron.' And as I walked I had much elevation of soul to the heavenly thrones, with certain cogitations of God's neighbourhood to very holy men, so that to me it seemed not possible to say whether He might not still work manifest wonders by their hand. Not to convince them with visible demonstrations, for that is the Catholic solicitation for an idol; but to work spiritual wonders by their means. Thereafter I set myself to rough-hew my discourse, of which more when it takes shape; taking among hands the 'Roman history,' not without prayer that the Lord would open to me the mystery of his Providence, when, for the first time, (oh, unbelief!) it occurred to me that I was reading the rise of the fourth great monarchy into whose hands God had given the earth. The works of the Lord are wonderful—sought out are they of all those who take pleasure therein; so wonderful was the rise of Macedon and of Persia, for Babylon I have forgot. . . . . Another letter from Henry Paul, commending a Miss M—— to me as one of the people of God who wished to join our fold. She is welcome in the Lord's name. I could not see her, being occupied with a little circle of kinsfolk, who were Peter F——'s wife, and daughter, and mother. . . . . They are on their way to join him at Dover: (how full of painful interest that place is now become! My Edward! oh, my Edward!) The mother wishes to get a housekeeper's situation, for which she is qualified, and desires your countenance; so, while you are at Dumfries and Annan, I pray you to satisfy yourself of her character and ability, that we may help her, if we can. I commended them to the Lord after they had eaten bread with me. Thereafter I addressed myself to reading, being broke up for the day by this welcome interruption, until towards three, when I bore James P—— on his way to the inn, and returned to my own solitary meal; and after it I took myself much to task for want of temperance, which, after all, I have not yet attained to. It is a saying of one of the Fathers, 'In a full belly all the devils dance,' and Luther used to say 'he loved music after dinner, because it kept the devils out.' But I believe the truth is,

that temperance wrought by the Spirit is the only defence, of which I felt this day the lack, although my dinner was wholly of pea-soup and potatoes; but I took too much, and was ashamed of the evil thoughts which have dared to show face in the temple of the Holy Ghost.

"I prayed the Lord to strengthen me in all time coming for His greater glory, and proceeded, about five, on my way to Mr Barclay's, Fleet Market, taking by the way a brother of Hall's, whose house joins by the back of the church. Oh, Isabella, how frail we are! There was a sweet boy of nine years, who had never ailed anything in his life, brought in one day to the jaws of death, if he be not already consumed of it, by the croup; and a poor family, and, I fear, an ignorant one, with whom, having left my prayers and help, I proceeded on my way. The boy had said, 'Mother, do not fret; I must die some time, and I will go to heaven.' So would patient Edward have said, if he could have spoken anything. Love not Margaret after the flesh, but after the spirit, my dearest wife. I went with fear and trembling to Mr Barclay's, but with self-rebuke that I had not made it a day of prayer and humiliation for their sakes. I had besought the Lord, but I did not feel that He was found of me; and I had meditated, by the way, this one thought, kindred to what I set forth in my last letter, 'That when the Holy Ghost departs from any set of opinions, or form of character, they wither like a sapless tree.' Witness the preaching of Scotland, the voice of the Spirit of a former age; witness the high-flying Whigs of the Assembly, the armour-bearers of the covenanting Whigs of the Claim of Rights; witness the radical and political Dissenters of England, the mocking-birds of the Nonconformists; witness the High Churchmen of England, who pretend to maintain what Ridley, and Latimer, and Hooper embodied. Ay, there is the figure; the doctrine is the vainest when the Spirit is gone. Meditate, Isabella, this deep mystery of the spirit in man quickened by the Holy Spirit. I had one meditation at home, 'That immortal souls, not written compositions, nor printed books, were the *primum mobile* of a minister's activity.' I found father and mother, and two sisters, and from the first Mr B—— opened his doubts and difficulties to me, by telling me that he hoped to be able to enter better into my new subject than into my former, but declaring that he had seen new views of his sinfulness, and brought to look to Christ alone for salvation, whom he looked upon as his Mediator, Intercessor, and Redeemer, but could not see as equal with God

though he was God's representative. I opened the great mystery as I could, telling him at the same time it was only to be opened by the Holy Spirit, upon whose offices I enlarged, and went over a large field of demonstration with much satisfaction to them all, and deep emotion with the two daughters, whom I think the Lord our God is calling. Then we came to speak of dear David's death, by my recital of which they were very much moved, as also by my unfolding the blessed fruits of our Edward's removal. He has been much upon my mind this day. Dearest, I think light is breaking upon Mr Barclay's mind. Pray for him; he is to mark his difficulties, which I am to do my endeavour to clear up. When I returned, here waited Miss W—— and a Mr M'Nicol, from Oban, who, with his wife, desired the ordinance. . . . . Our chapter was the first seven verses of the fourteenth of Luke. What a touching appeal that parable of the sheep was for the poor publican to the Pharisees; how delicately reproved they were, themselves being allowed to be as men who needed no repentance compared with these sinners! Grant that ye are the unoffending, unstrayed children of the house; but here is one that has shipwrecked. May I not go and seek him as ye would a strayed sheep, and, if he return, will not the family forget their every-day blessedness in a tumult of joy? The Lord strengthened me in prayer, and now He hath strengthened me in this writing beyond my expectations. Kiss our beloved child for her father's sake. I heard of you both by those airy tongues that syllable men's names. . . . . Fear the Lord, my wife, always; fear the Lord! . . . . .

"*Wednesday*, 23*rd*.—This has been to me a day of temptation from dulness and deadness in the divine life. I know not whence arising, if it be not from want of more patient communion with God in secret, and more frequent meditation of His holy Word. Oh, Isabella, there is no abiding in the truth but by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is not reasoning, or knowledge, or admonition, or council, or watchfulness, or any other form of spiritual carefulness and ability, but His own presence—His own Spirit, quick and lively, which maketh us tender, ready, discerning, in the ways of righteousness and iniquity. The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Dearest, mistrust reasonings, mistrust examples, mistrust prudential views, mistrust motives, and seek for an abiding, a constant spirit of holiness, which shall breathe of God, and feel of God, and watch in God, and care in God, and in all things reveal God to be with us and in

us. A child possessed of the Holy Spirit is wiser to know righteousness from iniquity than the most refined casuist or the most enlightened divine. It is truly a spiritual administration, the present administration of our souls, and we see but as through a glass, but afterwards face to face. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall know as we are known. Oh, seek a presence, an ever-abiding presence of the Holy One, for yourself and your husband! Yet, though heavy in soul, I cried to the Lord very often, and He has heard my prayer. I know that we shall be tried with various tribulations, but we shall not be prevailed against. While I was occupied constructing my morning discourse, Mr N—— came in, and we had a season of brotherly communion. His sisters go forward, all the three, with one consent, and bear a loving heart to us and to all the people of God. They wished books to peruse, and I recommended to them Edwards' *History of Redemption*, to read along with the Old Testament history of the Church, and to prepare them for reading the New Testament history of the Church. Oh, that this was drawn up by one possessed of the Spirit of God, and not the spirit of history, who, in a short space and with a round pen, would draw it out after the manner of the books of Samuel and the Chronicles, adjoining to it specimens of the most pious writings of the Fathers, which might answer to the history, as the prophets answer to the Old Testament history. . . . . I also opened my lecture, which is to treat of the duty of the Church to support its ministers, for I perceive that, from want of being discoursed of, these great rudimental ideas of the Church have changed into convenient and expedient arrangements of human wisdom.

"I dined alone, and after dinner kept on with the History of Rome, whose age of tumults and domestic seditions I have arrived at, the condition of people, with plebeian institutions, who have lost the bond of religion, and the domestic and moral obligations resting on it. That tradition is remarkable of Julius Cæsar's having the vision of a man of great stature and remarkable appearance inviting him to cross the Rubicon, which paved the way to the empire, in which form it becomes a prophetic object, and has a prophetic character. I have resolved, nevertheless, to throw that part of my book * which derived its materials from the book of Esdras, into a note, lest I should give encouragement to the prudential advocates of the Apocrypha. It is there that Julius Cæsar is a prophetic character . . . . . When we came to Mrs David's, I had such a desire to deliver Brightwell from political leaning in the Slavery

* *Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed.*

Abolition question, for I find they are to a man gone into the idea that Christianity must have the effect of making the slaves disquiet; that is, they lean so much to the political question, that even themselves say, until they are emancipated, it is vain that you seek to Christianize them. This is turning round with a vengeance; but it is so everywhere. Oh, my Isabella, how the sons of God are intermarrying with the daughters of men! Everywhere some evil spirit is seeking alliance with the Holy Spirit. This is to me an evidence that the deluge is at hand. Every day I feel more and more alone, and more and more rooted and grounded in the truth. The Lord make me faithful, though it were by the hating of father, and mother, and brother, and my own life. William Hamilton sees this matter as I do, and I found Dr M—— saw the question of liberty as I do: these are the only two concurrences I have had in these broad and general questions since I came to visit you. But I thank God, in other matters of a private and personal kind, I am at one with all the children of God. Oh, out of what a pit the Lord hath brought me! How I abhor my former self and all my former notions! I was an idolater of the understanding and its clear conceptions; of the spirit, the paralysed, dull, and benighted spirit, with its mysterious dawnings of infinite and everlasting truth: I was no better than a blasphemer. Now the Lord give me grace to bear with those who are what I lately was. This discourse wore me out, and, when I came to church, I was more fit for a couch and silence; but I sought strength, and, though I could not reach the subject in all its extent—'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me'—I trust I was able somewhat to put the people on their guard against Satan's temptations, and establish the Church in Christ, their everlasting strength. . . . .

"*Thursday*, 24*th*. . . . . In this record, which I make daily for the comfort and edification of my dear wife, I desire God to be my witness and constant guide, lest I should at any time consult for the gratification of my own vanity, or warp truth from the great end of His glory, and the comfort of His saint. And may He not suffer the method which I pursue, of personal narrative, to betray me into any egotism or self-preference, to the predjudice of holy truth! In the morning, our dear friend B. M—— came to breakfast, bringing (diligent man!) the sheets of the third volume of Bacon with him. He preferred to be with us during worship, and was very much affected, as I judge, by our simple service. We read that sublime evaluation of wisdom in the Book of Job (xxviii.), which was so appropriate to our dear friend's mind, though it came in course, and I was

so stupid and dull, or overawed by his presence, as not to be able personally to apply it. Dearest Isabella, what a passage of Holy Writ that is! What a climax of sublimity, ranging through the profound mysteries of the bowels of the earth, and the knowledge of man and all his most valuable possessions, and through the earth and the hoary deep, and through death and the grave, till at length he finds it in the simplicity of spiritual truth:—'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding.' It is equalled by the nineteenth chapter, which is in the pathetic what the other is in the sublime; expressing the uttermost dejection and desolation, and from the depths of it all piercing through gloomy time, and hoary ruin and waste, to the resurrection, when he should meet the Redeemer from all these troubles, and stand before Him in immortal being. My dear companion of thought, meditate these two chapters of inspiration; they will repay you well.

"The four German missionaries came in during prayer, and I think I had a spirit of supplication granted to me in interceding for their sakes. We had a sweet discourse during breakfast. I think our dear friend is melting into sweeter moods, and overcoming himself not a little. I trust, by the grace of God, to see him a disciple of the Lord, humble and meek. His manner to me is utterly changed, permitting me to follow my own manner of discourse in things spiritual and divine. When breakfast was finished, I left him and James together, and brought the missionaries into the library, for they came to take leave. Then I opened to them the condition of the world, as presented to us in the prophecy, and the hopes to which they had to look forward; of the falling 'of the cities of the nations,' that is, the superstitions of the world. Then, as their constant encouragement, I read them the seventeenth chapter of John: their Lord's intercession for their sakes, which now He hath power also to accomplish, if they have faith in Him. Oh, Isabella, it seemed to me a rich reward of all their labours, that they would be brought to a nearer acquaintance with these most precious apostolic consolations, the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of John. Then I recounted to them my own missionary success in London, the hindrances of Satan, the enmities of my countrymen and their evil reports, the enemies in this place, and whatever else was raised up against me, in order to acquaint them with the wonderful works of God on my behalf, unworthy sinner, headstrong rebel, as I am. Then we joined in prayer, and I besought the Lord to be for home and friends, and wisdom and strength, to these

defenceless sheep, which were about to go forth among wolves. I made them write their names and nativities in my book, chiefly for your eye, seeing you are not permitted to see them before they go. I do again pray the Lord to be their guide and their prosperity.

"By this time the mourning coach had arrived, to carry me to the funeral of my beloved son in the Gospel, which took up, by Clerkenwell church, a Mr T——, who, with his wife, are hearers in my church; with whom also I returned, and was enabled to speak clearly to his soul, without any shamefacedness, and, I trust, with pastoral love and fidelity. The truth drew tears from his eyes; whether the Lord may bless it to his spirit, He who is wise will witness. When we arrived, there were several assembled of her trusty friends and nearest kindred, and among others, Mr A——, the counsellor. He began to remind me, in a voice little apt to mourning, or mindful of the sacredness of the house of mourning, that the last time we had met was at the house of feasting, dining with the lords at the Old Bailey; upon which I felt it my duty, in order to overawe worldly intrusions, to take up that word and say that my friend had reminded me of our last meeting at the house of feasting, and that as it would have been thought very indecorous then to have obtruded the face or feeling of sorrow, so this house of sorrow and death had also its rights, which did not bear with the conversation of lively (minds) and worldliness; but with humble moods and downcast spirits, and mourning before the Lord, and other afflictive conditions of the soul; and when it was a Christian who was taken, and from Christians that he was taken, there should shine upon the troubled waters a gleam of light, and a hope of glory, and thankfulness, and joy: the joy of grief that he had escaped the troublous and chastening deep. This led to discourse that was profitable. . . . . Poor William wept very sore, but always sorest when I mingled religious warnings to him and counsels; then he turned his face and his eyes to me, as we walked together in the churchyard, and wept without restraint, as if he had said, Oh, forsake me not, forsake me not! And I will not forsake thee, my orphan boy, God not forsaking me. It drizzled and rained; several of the congregation were waiting there, to walk behind the company; and when he was lowered into the grave, I stood forth to declare the conquest of death and the grace of God, in the faith of our brother, and exhorted the people to be of a good and constant faith, after which we prayed and departed to our homes and occupations, I trust not without motions of the Holy Spirit to a better life. Then applying my-

self to study what short interval was left me, I proceeded to Bedford Square. . . . . On my way, I called at Mr H——'s, and found the old man growing worse; but he would not see me. That is very remarkable. I gather that he sees his partner. Dare he not bear my probe? It is wont to be very gentle; but she is a saint growing fast. . . . .

"*Friday, 25th November.*—This morning I arose rather worn and weary. . . . . I have all day experienced that trial which many have continually, of a troublous body, but am better now at night. This condition of my body and mind was not relieved by many interruptions, while I had upon me the weight of two discourses. First, Mr Hamilton bringing me the tidings of Mr H——'s illness; then Mr Whyte, who called by appointment; then Mr Dinwiddie posting with the same account of Mr H——. I would they would help me, not beat me up as if I were slothful, when my poor soul is like to languish with too much exertion. But formality, formality, thou art man's scourge! and thou, spirit of truth and duty, thou art man's comforter! My elders have a nice idea of things being rightly managed, I wish they had the spirit of it; and I think that also is growing. Then came Miss D—— with the same tidings; and though I was in the midst of weakness, with such a load on my mind, I went my ways with my papers in my pocket, having to meet Mr W—— at Mr Dinwiddie's at dinner. I found Mr H—— shut himself up from my visits, although he saw both his medical man and his mercantile partner. I pray the Lord to be his Shepherd and comfort in my stead; and we prayed in the adjoining room, and afterwards I came down-stairs to study, being purposed to wait as long as I could. Towards four Mrs H—— came to me, and we had much discourse with one onother. She told me of the saintly character of her father, and of Mr H——'s grandfather. . . . . Why are there no such saints in Scotland now? Because their wine is mingled with water—their food is debased. It will nourish men no longer, but dwarflings. Oh, Scotland! oh, Scotland! how I groan over thee, thou, and thy children, and thy poverty-stricken church! Thy Humes are thy Knoxes, thy Thomsons are thy Melvilles, thy public dinners are thy sacraments, and the speeches which attend them are the ministrations of their idol. And the misfortune, dearest, is that the scale is falling everywhere in proportion, ministers and people, cities and lonely places; so that it is like going into the Shetland Islands, where, though you have the same plants, they are all dwarfed, and the very animals dwarfed, and the men also. So valuable is pure, unadulterated doctrine; so valuable is pure

faithful preaching; so valuable is simple faith, and a single eye to the glory of God. How well the state of our Church, nay, of the Christian Church in general, is described by the account of the Laodicean Church. It almost tempts me to think more of the idea that these seven Churches are emblems of the seven ages of the Christian Church, to the last of which men are now arrived. My dear, if this is to be reformed, if it is to be withstood, and I have faith to undertake it, I think I must stand alone, for I can get no sympathy amongst my brethren. Dr Gordon even has not had this revealed to him; and for Dr Chalmers, he is immersed in civil polity and political economy, a kind of purse-keeper to the Church Apostolic. And for Andrew Thomson, he is a gladiator of the intellect, his weapons being never spiritual, but intellectual merely, and these of an inferior order,—nothing equal to those that are in the field against him. Of these things I am calmly convinced; for these things I am truly troubled; and to be helpful to the removal of these things, I pray God for strength continually. You must be a helpmeet for me in this matter as in other matters, and, I pray you, for that as well as for your own blessedness, seek the purity of the faith, the *sincere* milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby. So I counselled dear Mrs H——, when she looked out from those eyes so full of sorrow, so full of doubt, so full of supplication, and gave me her cold hand again and again, and often asking that I would remember them in my prayer.

"I walked melancholy enough along Burton Crescent, to see the church for the second time, which is now up to the level of the first windows, indeed above it, and in front the yellow stones are showing themselves above the ground, and when it is finished I doubt not it will be a seemly building. But may the Lord fill it with the glory of His own spiritual presence, and endow me with gifts to watch over the thousands who are to assemble therein! or raise up some other more worthy, and take me to His rest. Ah! how formality hath worn out the excellent faculties of the females at Burton Crescent, and the continual longing for that state and rank whence they have fallen! Oh, how thou dost skilfully take thy game, thou spirit of delusion! O Lord, deliver Thou their feet out of the net, I do humbly pray Thee; and give me grace to be found faithful in this city of the dead. After dinner I opened my mouth to them all—Mr Woodrow, Hamilton, Virtue, Aitchison—expounding to them the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and the withered trunk of form, ceremony, and mere doctrine which remained when He was gone; illustrating

it by all things in which there was once a spirit of holiness, and which, during the last century, the most unspiritual, I think, we ever have had, faded away out of everything; whereby we are become these meagre skeletons of saints and ministers which I lamented over. They had nothing to say in reply, and, if I might judge, were a good deal impressed with what I had testified. The Lord give it fruit! Mr Woodrow and I came away at eight o'clock, and I bore him company through Russell Square. I think he is likely to be elected,* but it is by no means certain yet. The elders have been telling him that he must be more plain, as they are plain people; that is, he must not leave their beaten track; and that he must be shorter; that is, not interrupt their family arrangements of dinner, &c.; and that he must be more explicit in discourse, in order to gratify their desire of mere fragments of knowledge, instead of receiving the living continuity of spirit and soul, which a discourse ought to be. Oh, that cutting of truth into bits is like dividing the body into fragments! Death, death unto it! The truth should breathe continuous; the spirit of truth should inspire every member of a discourse, instead of our having it in those cold, lifeless limbs of abstract intellectual proportions. How your father would laugh at this! Nevertheless, tell him it is truth, though ill-expressed in my present feebleness of conception. I told Woodrow, if he yielded a scruple of his ministerial liberty, I would call him brother no more, but impeach him of treason to the Great Prophet. Nevertheless, I encouraged him to be of good cheer, for he was a little cast down. I came home by Mr H——'s, and found him as I had left him; but saw her not—only comforted poor Agnes, whom I met in the passage. Miss W—— came to prayers, and I trust the Lord was with us. The greater part of the afternoon I devoted to your ear, Tibby, which is to me more sweet audience than the ear of princes or of learned men. Fare thee well!

Saturday, 26th November.—Yesterday and yesternight, dearest wife, I had many thoughts of our departed son, our first-born, and I was able to use David's words in the Psalm of that night, 'Thy judgments, O Lord, are just, and in righteousness hast thou afflicted me.' My dreams brought you and little Margaret before me, and I said, Dear Isabella, it is little Edward; and was not undeceived till I saw her small black eyes instead of his full-orbed blue, whose loving kindness was so dear to me even in death. But my dreams withal were very pleasant, and not afflicted with evil suggestions. This morning I have arisen fresh and lively, and have already nearly finished

* As minister of one of the Scotch churches in London.

my discourses; and now, at three o'clock, am hastening to cover this sheet with sweet thoughts for your dear mind, that you may receive it before leaving Fife. Mr H—— is no more in this world. He died about eleven o'clock, and I have now a letter from dear Agnes. May the Lord comfort the widow and the fatherless! I think I shall have time, after finishing this, to hasten down, though it were but for a few minutes. Oh, Isabella! put nothing off, my dearest, put nothing off; have nothing to do, have all besought, have all believed, have all done, and live quietly unto eternity! Say so to your dear father and mother, and all the family. We know not what a day may bring forth. If you be languid, then cry for help; if you be under bondage, cry for deliverance; and abide believing, abide believing; opening your heart to the admonitions of the Holy One—your ear to admonitions of every faithful one. Turn aside from lies, from flattery, from vanity and folly. Be earnest, be grave—always ready. There will be no folly, nor laughter, nor bedimming of truth with false appearances, nor masquerading, in eternity. But I return. After prayer, in which I seek the spirit of prayer above all requests, for my soul wanders, there is an under-current of feeling, and even of thinking. It is very amazing we can speak to God so, and not to any mortal. I am oft to seek for an answer to man, when I am thinking of another matter; but I dare speak to God, though I am thinking of another matter. Oh! what is this, my dear Isabella? It is very lamentable, and I lament it very much. The Lord doth not hear us because we ask amiss. Now, my dear wife, make it for yourself and myself a constant prayer that we may have the spirit of prayer and supplication bestowed upon us; rather pause to recover the soul, than hurry on in a stream of words. I take it this must be still more felt by those who use forms, and that this is one of the chief advantages of the disuse of forms: but no means will charm forth the evil heart of unbelief. He only who hath all power in heaven and earth is able—our Saviour and our Lord. Now I had almost forgotten that this is the day before your communion. It is stormy here, may it be quiet with you; and to the saints may it be a day of much refreshment! . . . .

"Now, with respect to your journey, if you set out on Thursday you must not go farther than Dumfries that week; and then open your mind to Margaret and James Fergusson concerning the things of the Spirit. Be not filled with apprehensions about baby. The Lord will prove your shield and hers. There is nothing will interest you till you come to the edge of my Dumfriesshire. . . . . After you go through Thornhill you

pass the Campbell Water. . . . . Then as you come to the Shepherd's Bar, you are upon Allan Cunningham's calf-ground, and in the midst of a scene worthy of the Trosachs. . . . . Within four miles of Dumfries you pass through a village. That village my uncle Bryce founded for the people at the time of the French Revolution, when he wrote a book on *Peace*, seeing well that the spirit of anarchy was out; and a half-mile further on you will see Holywood Manse, a bow-shot from the road, and the church, where my uncle and aunt lie side by side. . . . . Now, for the rest, you will find a letter waiting you at Dumfries. . . . . The Lord guard you on your journey, and temper the blast to the little darling. . . . . It is now past four, and I hasten to salute Mrs H——, widow, with the blessing of her husband, and the children, orphans, with the blessing of their father. Be at peace, full of faith and blessedness!

"*Saturday, 26th November.*—After putting your letter in the post-office, and still without any uplifting of the soul that it might be safely conveyed to you, and arrive in good season (so doth custom eat out piety), I went directly to the H——s'; Mrs H——, the most composed, being manifestly full of faith, and by faith supported; and I felt moved with much fellow-feeling. She spoke of his kindness to all—of his charity to the poor—of his constant cheerfulness in a most perplexing and tried life—of his faith in Christ, though it had little outward appearance,—of all which I was well pleased to hear. We then went upstairs, and having assembled the family, I sought to apply to them the 130th Psalm and the 4th and 5th of 1st Thessalonians: showing them that the only hope was in Christ Jesus either for themselves or the departed. Then I proceeded to Mr W——, and received Mr Bell's instructions for you. The place is Bossal, near York. . . . You must go to the George Inn, York, which is the posting-house, and take a post-chaise to the house, where you are expected with much delight; and may it be delightful to us all. Mrs W—— is better. We had very sweet discourse, in which I was enabled to maintain faithfully the truth,—I fear, not so much in the love of it as I could desire. And, oh! I am pressed with the desire of nearer communion to the Divine throne! There is something in my spirit very paralytic there. Oh, that I could pray unto the Lord—even with what affection I write these letters! I do earnestly pray the Lord to take the veil off my heart, and I believe in good time He will. . . . . Now I go to seek the Lord in secret for us all. Farewell!

"*Sunday, 27th November.*—I have reason to bless the Lord, my dear Isabella, for His strengthening and encouraging presence this day, both in the ministry of the Word and of prayer;

which I receive as His wonderful patience with my unworthiness, and as a sign that His hand is towards me for good. In the morning prayer I was better able to abstract my soul from under-thoughts, and to stand with my people before the Lord. I have been led to think more concerning that under-current of thought during prayer, and I perceived it to be owing to our infidelity. The living and true God, with His acts and attributes, is not present to our spirit; but our own ideas of Him, and customs of discourse, which the mind presents while thinking of other things, as it doth in many other cases. . . . Therefore it is the awe of God's presence—the reality of His presence—by which the soul is to be cured of this evil—this heinous evil. It is the feeling of this want which has introduced pictures and statues among the Catholics, and I take it to be the same which makes the Episcopalian attached to forms. But nothing will do, dear, but His own presence—the presence of His own invisible Spirit in our hearts, crying unto our Father which is in heaven. Prayer, my dearest, is the complaint of the Holy Spirit under His incarnation in our hearts. Our chapter in the morning was the 5th of Hebrews, comprehending Christ's priesthood. But I find I have not strength for unfolding these high matters. My beloved, fare thee well! My baby, the blessing of the Lord upon thee!

"In considering the priestly office of Christ, be at pains to separate it from the prophetic. . . . My discourse was on justification by faith alone. . . . And I concluded with exhortations to humility, and an abiding sense of the Saviour's righteousness, and of our own wickedness, and of a new principle derived from the former, which should be generative of a set of works truly good, truly holy, truly blessed. In the evening I read the sweet and picturesque account of Isaac's courting, and took occasion to press the fidelity of the servant in all points, and to point out the verisimilitude which the narrative bore with the manners of the ages nearest to those times. I discoursed concerning the duty of the Church to their ministers in respect to support; yet handling the subject largely and widely, with the view of demonstrating the total disproportion between moral and spiritual services and pecuniary rewards,—showing them my favourite maxim, that money is the universal falsehood, and the universal corruption, when we use it for discharging obligations contracted by spiritual or moral services. For example, if you think the wage discharges you of your obligation to Mary, you are deceived out of so much spiritual feeling as should have repaid her, and corrupted into a worldling; and so if Mary were to think her obligations discharged by works; and

so of all giving of gifts to express sentiments. They do express the sentiment, but discharge it they can never. This was a very fertile topic of discourse, and full of warning to the worldly people. There were very large congregations to hear, and I trust they were edified. Our service extended to three hours in the morning, and two hours and a half in the evening, and I find I cannot relax. . . .

"*Monday*, 28*th*.—This morning Sottomayor the soldier was with us, and James and I, partly of charity, partly of veneration to the old Spanish character and literature, have agreed to take lessons in Spanish at seven every morning, which will curtail this letter. So we have provided us in Bibles, with which we are to begin, and afterwards we shall read Don Quixote. . . . . Then there came Mr M—— to read with me the Greek Testament, and we gave ourselves to the 6th chapter, which I will open to you in some other place. I think the Lord, by the help of Father Simon, hath enabled me to understand it. Oh, I thank God for the change upon that young man! Even P——, who is very judicious, and was with him an hour alone, could discern in him no superciliousness nor conceit. He is very docile, and is to come every Monday for an hour or two. I hope to do for him what others have done for me. . . .

"*Tuesday*, 29*th*.—Last night I endured the temptation of many evil thoughts and imaginations, which the good Spirit of God enabled me to overcome, although it was a great trouble and vexation to my soul. . . . . Such an almighty and infinite work is the sanctification of the soul! Our Lord hath said, 'Satan cometh and findeth nothing in me.' Alas! how otherwise with us! The Holy Spirit cometh and findeth nothing in us! . . . What a work is the sanctification of a soul! It is second only to its redemption; and to that second only in place and order, not in degree. In the morning, we started at seven o'clock to the Book of Samuel, and made out one chapter with Giuseppe Sottomayor, who commends himself more and more to my esteem as a man of true principle and piety. I think the work of conviction goes on in his mind. He breakfasted and worshipped with us; after which I came to my study, and did not rise, except to snatch a portion of dinner, till five o'clock. In that time I did little else than study a chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and read Poole's *Synopsis* upon it, which is written in Latin, with abundant Hebrew and Greek quotations, that occupy me well—insomuch that, if my time will allow, I purpose doing the same daily. For I fell in with a dictionary, which I can consider little else than a pro-

vidential gift, in two handy little quarto volumes,—a Latin dictionary, which renders the word into Hebrew, Greek, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Dutch; so that it is to me a continual assistance of the memory, besides affording a perpetual delight in tracing the diversity and analogy of languages, in which I had always great pleasure. . . . During my solitary study I received two sweet interruptions—one in the shape of a messenger from a far country, coming from one dear to you, but dearer to me, and who loves me too well to love herself well. Now, who is that? and who is that messenger? A riddle which I take you to resolve. . . . The messenger was from yourself, in the shape of a letter, laying out your plans of travel, and making merry with my scheme. Now Kant's *Metaphysics* was not in my mind, but that better authority, the road-book. For you must know that, setting off on Monday morning, I can be in York, you at Bossal, to breakfast on Tuesday. . . . So that you see there is neither Kantian negation of space and time, nor the wings of love, in the matter; but simple, prosaic, stage-coach locomotion. . . . Being so far, I went on to Bedford Square. . . . But there is no getting a spiritual discourse maintained: you can but set it forth in intellectual parables, which are nothing so efficient as the parables for the sense which our Lord was accustomed to use. But, dearest, we must either speak in parables to the world, or we must be silent; or we must present a wry and deceptive form of truth; or we must cast our pearls before swine. Of which choice the first is to be preferred, and our Lord therefore adopted it. Because a parable is truth veiled, not truth dismembered; and as the eye of the understanding grows more piercing, the veil is seen through, and the truth stands revealed. Now, parables are infinite; besides those to the imagination, they are to the intellect in the way of argument, to the heart in the way of tender expression and action, and to the eye in the way of a pure and virtuous carriage. And the whole visible demonstration of Christian life is, as it were, an allegorical way of preaching truth to the eyes of the world; whether it be wisdom in discourse, or charity in feeling, or holiness in action. But I wander. I returned home about seven, and addressed myself to write my action sermon;* but found myself too fatigued to conceive or express aught worthy of the subject—'Do this in remembrance of me'—and I know not whether anything may be yielded to me this night worthy

* The name usually given in Scotland to the sermon preached before the communion.

of it. . . . I trust our meeting may be blessed to add gifts to us mutually. I am truly happy to anticipate it so much sooner.

"You are now among my dear kindred, who I know will be very kind to you, for your own sake and for mine. I owe them all a great debt of love and affection, which I shall never be able to repay. I look to you to drop seasonable words into their ears, especially concerning their salvation and their little ones. For nothing is so fatal to Scotland as lethargy. I trust they are not nominal Christians; but I would fain have deeper convictions of so important a matter. I pray you not to yield anything to your natural kindness at the expense of your health, and risk of the infant; but in all things, as before the Lord, to take the steps which you judge the best, looking to His blessing. To this also I charge you by your love and obedience to me. This day is very fine. I hope you are on your journey; and I earnestly pray you may travel as Abraham did, at every resting-place setting up an altar to God in your heart. We remember you night and morning in our prayers; and I trust that the Lord will graciously hear us. At Annan I have nothing for you to say particularly, but to assure them of my most dutiful love and constant prayers, and to entreat them not to slumber. . . . The Lord bring you in safety to my bosom, and to your home. I know you will care for Mary in everything as one of the family, and bound to us by many acts of faithfulness and love.

"*Wednesday, 30th November.*—My dear Isabella, I am daily loaded with the tokens of the Lord's goodness, which I regard with the more wonder and gratitude, as I have been this week more than ordinarily tried with inward trials; and to receive tokens of love from a friend, when we are wavering in our fealty, is also always very full of rebuke. But I have withstood Satan according to my ability, and he hath not been allowed to prevail over me, nor will, I trust, by the continuance of unfailing prayers. . . . . So you see, my dear, what tokens I have of the Lord's blessing; there are not fewer than thirty-five who have come seeking to be joined to the Church at this time; and no other season have I observed the same zeal, and intelligence, and faith. Oh, that the Lord for their sakes would furnish me with good! I lament much that so few of the Scotch youths are drawn. I think there is not much above one-third Scotchmen. I trust the Lord will draw near to them. I think they can hardly fail either to leave the congregation altogether, or to join the Church, my preaching has been of late so separating. . . . This letter will reach you at Annan,

where, individually and collectively, I pray my dutiful affection and ministerial blessing to be given by you. Farewell! and may the Lord be your shade to-morrow, in your journey southward!

"*Thursday, 1st December.*—The beginning of a new month, my dearest, wherein let us stir up our souls to more lively faith in these great and precious promises which we inherit from the death of our Lord, which you have so lately, and which we are so soon about to commemorate. I look back upon the last month as one in which I have had various experiences of good and evil—encouragements beyond all former experience, and trials of Satan proportioned thereto. . . . . I have had many revelations, and beckonings, and overtures to enter into the temple's inmost place, which I shall yet do, if the Lord permit. If I allowed anxiety to prey upon me, I would now be anxious for you and the child, having seen by the papers that so much snow is fallen in the North. But the Lord, who sendeth His ice as morsels, and giveth the snow like wool, and scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes, will not let it alight upon you without good and gracious ends, for the very hairs of your head are numbered. I have had a good deal of conversation this night with Mr Hunter, who is returned from the North, concerning the comparative fatigue and comfort of posting and travelling by the mail, and he says for both reasons, but especially for less exposure to the cold, the mail is to be preferred. . . . . Take wise counsel in the matter. I had a very pleasant call this morning from Mr W——, desiring, by conversation with me, to express his forgiveness of his friend, and to purge himself of all malice and revenge, before bringing his gift to the altar. . . . . After he was gone, I sought to continue my discourse, and, when I had laid down my pen to enter upon my Hebrew studies, I was interrupted by the call of a young lady, who had stolen to me, having heard me preach, and thinking me likely to listen to her. . . . I thought the struggle between shamefacedness and fear on the one hand, and her desire of counsel on the other, would have wholly overpowered her. I found she had been taught of the Spirit without knowing it, and, when I taught her by the Word, it was sweet to witness the response of her soul pronouncing the Amen, 'That I know,' 'That I feel is true.' She is one in a family, and the rest have no fellowship with her. . . . .

"A proof-sheet occupied me till dinner, and after dinner I read the Roman History till towards six, when I had to meet my young communicants, to introduce them to the session. There was a goodly number of them present, to whom I ad-

dressed a word of instruction concerning the infinite honour to which they were admitted, and the duties which devolved upon them in their Christian calling. . . . . I had received a letter from Andrew P——, desiring that his mother might be remembered in our prayers, as one looking for death. This moved me to go and see the afflicted servant of Christ, whom I found brought very low, and not likely to recover again, her children rejoicing in her joy, and content to part with her to the joy of her Lord. So the arrows of the Lord are flying on all sides of us. This made it past eleven when I got home, and I found Mr Murray sitting to inform me that he was about to become 'a Benedict,' which means blessed,—which means a husband. I wish them all happiness. And so was I hindered from fulfilling this duty, being overladen with sleep, and worn out with labour. . . . .

"*Friday, 2nd December.*—This morning, dearest, I felt, when called at seven, the effects of yesterday's labour, and was not able to arise, from headache, which I durst not brave, having such a weight of thought and action before me; therefore I lay still, endeavouring to sleep it off, and rose not till half-past nine, when descending quietly, I sought to get to work without interruption, and, thank God, have made out a good day's work, being well-nigh finished with my action sermon; and, for the rest, I am very much disposed to depend upon the Spirit to give me utterance. For to-morrow, all the morning I have to be helpful to Mrs H——, and the evening I have to preach to the people. After working with my pen, I took an interlude of history, walking in the garden, when my thoughts are fullest of our darling. But, indeed, I know not how it is, I think the last two or three days I have been thinking of him too much, and last night I dreamed he was in life, and, though drooping like a flower, giving hope of health again. He was on your knee, and I thought I caught the first sign of hope—to seize him and carry him into the fresh air, when it all vanished before me into the sad reality. Then I addressed myself to my Hebrew studies, at which I continued till I went forth to minister comfort to Mrs H——'s family, with whom I worshipped, opening to them that Psalm of divine sorrow (the xlii.) where the Psalmist, in all his sorrows, sees nothing to lament but his distance and separation from the house of God, and the communion of His people. I came back at half-past eight, having several appointments with those who had not spoken to me in time, yet sought with earnestness to approach the table of the Lord. And now, more briefly, and less feelingly and spiritually than I would have desired, have I set

forth to you the incidents of Thursday, which to my soul hath been a day of consolation. Oh, that the Lord would break these bands of sleep—these heavy eyelids of drowsiness, my beloved wife, and awake us to the full vision of the truth and possession of the things of faith! You are now, I trust, by the mercy of God, seated beside my most honoured parents, to whom I present my dutiful affection, praying the Lord to compass them with His grace; and, oh, tell them to press inwards to the temple; not to rest, but to press onward. Exhort them from me to have no formality. Tell them that, until religion cease to be a burden, it is nothing—till prayer cease to be a weariness, it is nothing. However difficult, and however imperfect, the spirit must still rejoice in it, after the inward man. . . . If I write much longer, you will not be able to read; for there is a great combination against me—a weary hand, a heavy eye, a pen worn to the quick, a dull mind, and a late hour; and a day before me of much occupation. Therefore, farewell to all that are with you, and to all with whom you abide!

"*Saturday.* I thought, my dearest, to have finished this before the post, but have been taken up all the morning, till two o'clock, doing the last duties to our beloved friend, Mr H——; and having to preach to-night, I rather choose to take up the only hour that is left me in meditation for so many souls. The Lord bless you, and the house in which you dwell! I trust in the grace of God to sustain me to-morrow, and to give you a good journey.

"The Lord bless my father's house!

"Your affectionate husband,

"Edward Irving."

"If you take the mail from Carlisle, you should take it only to Kattrick Bridge, or, perhaps, a stage farther. I think it is but eighteen miles from Kattrick Bridge, and the landlord seemed to me a very pleasant old man. If the time of leaving Carlisle be too soon, you could perhaps go on a stage or two the night before. The Lord direct you in all things!

"Forget not the shoes—I care not how many pairs, only pay for them; for my mother will always make herself a beggar for her children."

Thus concludes a journal which, perhaps, has no parallel in modern days. A picture so minute, yet so broad—a self-revelation so entire—a witness so wonderful of that household love, deepened by mutual suffering and sorrow, which so far transcends in its gravity and soberness the more voluble pas-

sions of youth—has never, so far as I am aware, been given to the world. It is not wonderful that, over the vicissitudes of more than a quarter of a century, the scattered remnants of the family, once admitted, even in part, to the secret soul of such a man, should remember these letters with a certain tearful exultation, the traces of the departed glory; nor that the wife, to whom all were addressed, should have cherished them to the last as too sacred for common sight. This is the first and only journal of Irving's life. On various occasions afterwards, he was separated from his wife for considerable periods; but never again produced anything like the affecting history, at which he laboured day by day and hour by hour, to cheer the mother of his dead baby, as she lay, weak and sorrowful, in the faintest hour of a woman's life, in the sad affectionate shelter of her father's house. Few men or heroes have been laid in their grave with such a memorial as envelopes the baby name of little Edward; and I think few wives will read this record without envying Isabella Irving that hour of her anguish and consolation.

CHAPTER XII.

1826, 1827.

After the full and detailed personal portrait which Irving gives of himself in these journal-letters, a period of comparative silence follows. This was the silent seed-time of the exciting and exhausting years, full of conflict and struggle, upon the threshold of which he stood. The full flood of life which now carried him along was not more visible in his actual labours than it was in the eager progress of his unresting and ever-active spirit. Whether his mind had ever been content with the sober Presbyterian ideal of a democratic Church, in which the will of the people had really, if not nominally, a distinct and apparent sway, and in which the priests were subject to the perpetual criticism of a community too much disposed to argument and individual opinion to yield much veneration to their legitimate leaders, it is difficult to say; but the Scotch imagination has always found a way of escaping from those prosaic trammels. That which the outside world has distinguished as religious liberty, and recognized as the object of the

many struggles in which the Church of Scotland has engaged, has never been so named or considered among the champions of that Church. Their eyes, throughout the long and eventful drama, have been fixed, not upon the freedom of individual worship, or the rights of the Christian people, but upon a much loftier, ineffable principle, often converted into an instrument of evil, yet always retaining, to some, the divinest sunshine of ideal perfection. Now-a-days, when martyrdoms are no longer possible, and heretical stakes and blocks are long ago out of fashion, it is more difficult than it once was, to idealize, out of a struggle for mere ecclesiastical authority, that conflict which, in the days of blood and violence, so many humble heroes waged for the headship of Christ. To many a Scotch confessor this doctrine has stood instead of a visible general, animating the absolute peasant-soul to so distinct a conception of Christ's honour and authority, as the object for which it contended, that the personal ardour of the conflict puzzles the calm observer, who understands as nothing but a dogma this inspiring principle. The events which made the great crisis in the existence of Scotland a struggle for her faith, drove this lofty, visionary conception into the ideal soul of the nation, where it has ever since existed, and is still appealed to, as the experience of to-day can testify. When, according to the evidence of facts, the Covenanters were fighting against the imposed liturgy and attempted episcopacy of the Charleses, they were, to their own fierce consciousness, struggling for the principle that, in the Church, Charles was nothing and Christ all in all; nor has the sentiment failed in more recent struggles. Irving had received this national creed along with his earliest impressions: he had even received it in the still closer theocratic model well known in ancient Scotland, where God the ruler was everywhere visible, in providence, judgment, and mercy. But his impassioned soul led him to reconstruct upon these sublime elements another ideal of a Church than that which has long been supreme in Scotland. Unconsciously his thoughts elevated themselves, and grew into fuller development; unconsciously he assumed in his own person the priestly attitude, and felt himself standing between God and the people. Then the community itself rose under his glowing gaze into a baptized world,—a Christendom separated by the initiatory ordinance of Christianity, of which Christ was the sole head. The longer he contemplated this world, the more it rose out of the region of doctrine into that of reality. That Lord became no distant Presence, but a Person so intensely realized and visible, that the adoring eye per-

ceived the human pulses throbbing in His veins; and for awe, and love of that mysterious union, the worshipper could not keep silence. That faith became no system of words, but a divine evidence and substantial proof of the unutterable glories; that baptism grew out of a symbol and ceremony into a Thing,—an immortal birth, to which God Himself pledged His word. One can see this wonderful process going on in the transparent, vehement spirit. Everything suffered a change under those shining eyes of genius and passion. From impersonal regions of thought they rose into visible revelations of reality. To a mind instinct with this realizing principle, the conception of a Second Advent nearly approaching was like the beginning of a new life. The thought of seeing His Lord in the flesh cast a certain ecstasy upon the mind of Irving. It quickened tenfold his already vivid apprehension of spiritual things. The burden of the prophetic mysteries, so often darkly pondered, so often interpreted in a mistaken sense, seemed to him, in the light of that expectation, to swell into divine choruses of preparation for the splendid event which, with his own bodily eyes, undimmed by death, he hoped to behold. He had commenced his labours, and the studies necessarily involved in those labours, with a certain expansion of spirit, and power of sublimating whatever truth he touched, but no apparent divergence from ordinary belief. But years of close dwelling upon the sacred subjects which it was his calling to expound, had borne their natural fruit. Not yet had he *diverged;* but he had expanded, intensified, opened out, in an almost unprecedented degree. Special truths, as he came to consider them, glowed forth upon his horizon with fuller and fuller radiance; life and human affections seemed to go with the adventurer into those worlds of believed but not appreciated divinity; and as he himself identified one by one those wonderful realizations, which were to him as discoveries, with ever a warmer and fuller voice he declared them aloud.

Such was his state of mind in the comparatively silent, and in some respects transition, period to which we have now reached. His first sorrow did but strengthen the other influences at work upon him, while at the same time his many and continual labours, acting upon his health, obliged him to withdraw a little from the din and excitement of his battle-field, and left him fuller scope for his thoughts. In his winter solitude, while his wife was absent, he had begun, more from benevolent motives than with any idea of making use of the accomplishment, to study Spanish; but, before he had made any great advances in the language, a manner of turning

the new gift to the profit of the Church came, by a complication of causes—to his eyes clearly providential—in his way. A Spanish work, entitled "The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty," professedly written by Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra, a Hebrew convert to Christianity, but in reality, according to the facts afterwards ascertained, the production of a Jesuit priest, called Lacunza, was brought to him, as he describes in his preface to the translation of that work, by friends who had been specially impressed by his own views on the same subject. He found in it, as he declares, "the hand of a master," and not only so, but "the chief work of a master's hand;" and feeling assured that his God had sent this "masterpiece of reasoning" to him "at such a critical time, for the love of His Church, which He hath purchased with His blood," he resolved "to weigh well how I might turn the gift to profit." The result of his ponderings was, that he undertook the translation of the book, concluding, after his fashion, that the Church was as open to receive instruction, wheresoever it came from, as he himself was. Not very long before he had stood up against the champions of Catholic emancipation, taking, without a moment's hesitation, the unpopular side of the question, and declaring with the utmost plainness that, "though it expose me to odium in every form, I have no hesitation in asserting it to be my belief that when the rulers of this nation shall permit to the worshippers of the Beast the same honours, immunities, and trusts which they permit to the worshippers of the true God, that day will be the blackest in the history of our fate." But in the face of these uncompromising sentiments, and almost in a breath with the expression of them, he comes, with characteristic candour and openness, to the feet of the Spanish priest, receives his book "as a voice from the Roman Catholic Church," just as he claims for his own preaching to be "as a voice from the Kirk of Scotland," and finds it his duty to interpret between the Jesuit preacher and the English world. A better illustration of the native candour and simplicity of his mind could not be. Few Protestant preachers would take upon themselves such an office; and those who could believe their own views enforced and supported by the concurrence of a Catholic writer, would be, according to ordinary rules, men of tolerant, not to say latitudinarian, principles, —not rigid upon points of difference. Of a very different kind was the toleration of Irving. It was not toleration at all, indeed, nor any modern convenience, but simple love for all who loved his Master's appearing, and unfailing belief in

the human utterance which speaks out of the abundance of men's hearts. The same voice which had just declared its horror at the thought of political equality for the Catholics, and doubtless had been anathematized as the voice of a bigot in consequence, declares, immediately after, the determination of the speaker to give no Protestant comment upon the Jesuit's simple words. "The doctrines of the Roman Church," he says, "which now and then appear, are brought forward with so much simplicity and sincerity of faith, and so little in the spirit of obtrusion or controversy, that it seemed to me like taking an advantage of the honest, well-meaning man to enter the lists against him, unaccoutred as he was. . . . . Oh, no! I had no heart to catch him tripping, or to expose the weakness of so dear a teacher, concerning whom I was continually exclaiming to the companion of my solitary labours, 'I hope yet, in some of my future pilgrimages, to meet this gray-haired saint in the flesh, and receive his blessing, while I tell him how much I love him, and have profited from his instructions.'"

It was early in the year 1826, that the work of Ben-Ezra came into Irving's hands, confirming and strengthening his heart in respect to the new revelations of doctrine which had already illuminated his path. He had begun his Spanish studies only a few months before, with the view of helping his friend, Giuseppe Sottomayor; and it was not until summer that he undertook the translation of the book which had impressed him so deeply. He had, by this period, so exhausted his strength in his ordinary pastoral labours, that his congregation became anxious about his health, and insisted on the necessary rest and relaxation which alone could recruit him. "About this time," as he himself says, "it pleased the Lord to stir up the greater part of my flock to exhort me by all means, as I valued my own health and their well-being, to remove a little from the bustle and intrusion of this great city, and abide in the country during some of the summer months; and two of the brethren who loved me much engaged, unknown to me, a place in the country, where, without forsaking my charge, I might reside in peace and quietness amidst the beauty and bounty with which God hath covered the earth. This occurring so unexpectedly, at the time when all concerned were soliciting me to undertake the whole care and responsibility of the translation, and perceiving that the work was likely to suffer from a divided labour, without being at all hastened, I resolved at length, insufficient as was my knowledge of the language at that

time, to conquer all difficulties, and heartily to give myself to the Lord and to His Church during these weeks of retirement; for I was well convinced that the health which I most needed was the healing waters of the Holy Spirit, which I thus made bold to solicit, by devoting myself to His service; and certainly the labourer was not disappointed of his hire. I prevented the dawning of the morning, and I envied the setting in of the shades of evening to labour in my work; and when my hands and my eyes failed me, because of weakness, the helper whom God hath given meet for me served me with hers, and so we laboured to bring this labour of love to completion, purposing to offer it to the Church as our Christmas offering. Oh, that my brethren in Christ might have the same divine satisfaction and unwearied delight in reading, that I had in translating this wonderful work!"

It would be difficult to add to without impairing the perfection of this beautiful sketch of the summer leisure which Irving "gave to the Lord." The retirement of the pair, so wonderfully united in labour and sympathy, was at Beckenham; where, with that child of tears over whom they could not choose but watch with double solicitude, they lived in quiet, at least, if not in repose, for the greater part of the summer. During all this time, Irving went up to London every Saturday, remaining until Monday, to fulfil his usual laborious ministerial duties; and in the interval laboured, as he has described, at the work—perhaps of all literary labours the most tiresome and wearing out—of this translation. Such was his version of relaxation and ease. He worked at it so closely, that he was at one time threatened with loss of sight in consequence—those strong out-of-doors eyes of his evidently not having been adapted by nature for poring perpetually over print and paper. However, he appears to have known the true medicine for his own case. The village quiet, and incidental advantages, passively enjoyed, of fresh air and summer greenness, comforted and refreshed his heart, as he sat labouring with his imperfect Spanish over the long treatise of Lacunza; and, in the calm of those toils, his health returned to him. The defect in his eyes even helped him to find out the auxiliary which was at hand, and of which in after-times he largely availed himself. "I rejoice to tell you that Edward is very much better," writes Mrs Irving to her sister. "He has now made me almost entirely his amanuensis. I even write his discourses, which to him is a most wonderful relief. This will surprise you when you remember he could bear no one in the room with him; still he can bear

no one but myself; but he can stop and give ear to my observations." . . . . And the anxious mother diverges from this description into expressions of subdued alarm lest baby should have the whooping-cough, and a wife's tender admiration of her husband's increasing fondness for the child. Once more the strain is idyllic; but the fond woman's letters, in which "dear Edward" appears as the centre of everything, invested with a certain impersonal perfection, do not convey so clear a picture out of the bosom of that domestic happiness, tranquillity, anxiety, love, and labour—the sublime but common course of life—as the brief words in which he himself commemorates the summer scene. It was a halcyon moment, subdued by the touch of past sorrow, and that trembling which experience so soon brings into all mortal enjoyment, yet sweet with the more exquisite happiness which only those who have sorrowed and trembled together can snatch out of the midst of their years.

During the summer of 1826, while Irving was busied with his translation, the expectation conveyed in this Spanish book, to which his own mind and that of many others had been directed, with special force and clearness, not very long before, seems to have swelled within the minds of all who held it, to such an amount of solemn excitement and inquiring interest as could no longer keep silence. If the advent of the Lord were indeed close at hand; if events were visibly marching forward to that great visible era of doom and triumph, as so many students of prophecy concurred in believing—it was but natural that a hope so extraordinary should bring the little brotherhood into a union far more intimate than that of mere concurrence in belief. The bond beween them was rather that personal and exciting one which exists among a party full of anxiety for the restoration or election of a king—a patriotic band of conspirators, furnished with all the information and communications in cipher which cannot be given at length to the common mass —than the calmer link between theologians united in doctrine; and indeed one wonders more at the steady pertinacity of human nature which could go on in all the ordinary habitudes of the flesh under the solemn commotion of such a hope, than at any kind of conference or extraordinary consultation which might be held under the circumstances. "A desire to compare their views with respect to the prospects of the Church at this present crisis" naturally arose among them, as Irving informs us in the preface to *Ben-Ezra;* and after several meetings during the summer, a

serious and lengthened conference on the subject was arranged to take place at Albury, the residence of one of the most remarkable of the little prophetic parliament, the late Henry Drummond.

It is unnecessary to enter into any history of this remarkable man, who was but the other day, in the full force of his wonderful individuality, taking his part in all the affairs of the world. That individuality was too marked and striking to permit any calm, general opinion of the merits of a man who was at once a religious leader, and the patron of religious distress throughout the world; an independent influence, and most caustic critic in the British parliament; a believer in all the mysteries of faith, yet a contemptuous denouncer of everything beyond the shadowy line which he recognized as dividing faith from superstition; the temporal head, in some respects, of a band of religionists; and yet a man in full communion with the busy world, keeping the ear of society, and never out of the fullest tide of life. Such a conjunction of character had never been witnessed before in his generation, and has given occasion for estimates as different as are the points of view from which they are taken. Such as he was, all impetuous and wilful—with an arbitrary magnificence of disposition possible only to a man born to great riches, and unconscious of many of those natural restraints which teach most men the impossibility of putting their own will into full execution—Mr Drummond had from his youth dedicated his wealth, his wit, his unparalleled activity, his social position, everything he had and was, to the service of God, according as that appeared to his vivid but peculiar apprehension. Before this time he had appeared in the track of the Haldanes at Geneva, where the dead theological lethargy of the early Reformed Church was again waking into life, and had heard the Hebrew Wolff questioning the Roman professors in the chambers of the Propaganda. Not very long before, Irving himself, a very different mould of man, had recorded in his journal a certain dissatisfaction with the perpetual external activity of the restless religious potentate. But this warm link of common belief awoke closer feelings of brotherhood. Henry Drummond, impatient, fastidious, and arbitrary, a master of contemptuous expression, acting and speaking with all the suddenness of an irresponsible agent, was as unlike a man as could possibly be supposed to the great Scotch preacher, with all the grand simplicity of his assumptions and tender brotherhood of his heart. But "they who loved His appear-

ing" were united by a spell which transcended every merely human sympathy; and from this time Mr Drummond appears to have exercised a certain degree of influence, varying, but always increasing, over the career of Irving. Their first point of actual conjunction appears to have been at this meeting of prophetical students, held at Albury. When the summer was over, with all its restraints of labour and fashion, and early winter whitened the gentle hills of Surrey, the grave little company assembled in that house, which has since given character and colour to the district round it, and become for one division of Christians a kind of visible Beth-El in the wilderness of men's houses.

"One of our number," says Irving, in the preface already quoted, "well known for his princely munificence, thought well to invite by special letter all the men, both ministers and laymen, of any orthodox communion whom he knew or could ascertain to be interested in prophetic studies; that they should assemble at his house of Albury Park, in Surrey, on the first day of Advent, that we might deliberate for a full week upon the great prophetic questions which do at present most intimately concern Christendom. In answer to this honourable summons, there assembled about twenty men of every rank, and church, and orthodox communion in these realms; and in honour of our meeting, God so ordered it that Joseph Wolff, the Jewish missionary, a son of Abraham and brother of our Lord, both according to flesh and according to faith, should also be of the number. And here, for eight days, under the roof of Henry Drummond, Esq., the present High Sheriff of the county, and under the moderation of the Rev. Hugh M'Neil, the rector of the parish of Albury, we spent six full days in close and laborious examination of the Scriptures. . . . . These things I write from recollection, not caring to use the copious notes which I took; for it was a mutual understanding that nothing should go forth from the meeting with any stamp of authority, that the Church might not take offence, as if we had assumed to ourselves any name or right in the Church. But there was such a sanction given to these judgments by the fulness, freeness, and harmony which prevailed in the midst of partial and minor differences of opinion; by the spirit of prayer and love and zeal for God's glory and the Church's good; by the sweet temper and large charity which were spread abroad; and by the common consent that God was in a very remarkable way present with us—that I deem it my duty to make known these great results to the Christian churches which I have thus so early an opportunity of addressing.

"Having said so much, I think it to be my duty further to state the godly order and arrangement according to which the Albury conference, concerning the second Advent, was conducted; for to this, under God, I attribute in no small degree the abundance of blessings with which our souls were made glad. We set apart a day for each subject, and resolved to give no more than one day to each; and as we were but six free days assembled, having met on the Thursday and

parted on the Friday of the week following, we joined the fourth and seventh subjects together, conceiving them to be closely connected with one another; and having apportioned a separate subject to each day, we proceeded to each day's work after the following method: we divided the labour of each day into three parts—a morning diet before breakfast, the second and principal diet between breakfast and dinner, and the third in the evening. The object of our morning diet, to which we assembled at eight o'clock precisely—as early as we could well see—was twofold: first, to seek the Lord for the light, wisdom, patience, devotion to His glory, communion of saints, and every other gift and grace of the Holy Spirit which was necessary and proper to the labour which was that day appointed us in God's good providence; this office was always fulfilled by a minister of the gospel. Secondly, one of the number was appointed over night, and sometimes several nights before, to open the subject of the day in an orderly and regular way, taking all his grounds of argument, and substantiating all his conclusions out of the Holy Scriptures; and while he thus proceeded, the rest of the brethren took down the substance of what he said, and noted down the texts from which he reasoned; for we sat in the library around a large table, provided with every convenience for writing and for consulting the Holy Scriptures. When the outlines and divisions and whole groundwork of the subject were thus laid out by the brother, strengthened by our prayers, we parted without at that time declaring anything, and refreshed ourselves with breakfast, where we met the pious and honourable lady and family of our worthy host. Two full hours were allowed from the breaking up of the morning till the assembling of the midday diet, which was at eleven o'clock, in order that the brethren might each try and prove himself before the Lord upon the great questions at issue, and that we might come together with convictions, not with uncertain persuasions, and speak from the conscience, not from present impressions. And when we assembled, and had shortly sought the Divine favour to continue with us, an office generally performed by our reverend Moderator, he proceeded in due course to ask each man for his convictions upon the subject which had been laid before us in the morning; and the rest diligently used their pen in catching the spirit of what dropped from each other's lips. No appeal was allowed but to the Scriptures, of which the originals lay before us; in the interpretation of which, if any question arose, we had the most learned Eastern scholar perhaps in the world to appeal to, and a native Hebrew —I mean Joseph Wolff. In this way did every man proceed to lay out the nature and ground of his convictions, which was done with so much liberty, and plentifulness, and mutual respect and reverence of the Holy Word, as much to delight our souls. Now this diet lasted oft four, and sometimes almost five hours,—our aim being to gather the opinions of every one before we parted; and when we tired, we refreshed ourselves with prayer, which also we regarded as our main defence against Satan. This diet also we closed with an offering of thanksgiving by any of the clerical brethren whom the Moderator might pitch upon. After dinner we again proceeded, about seven o'clock, to the work of winding up and concluding the whole subject; but in a more easy and familiar manner, as being seated round the fire of the great library-room, yet

still looking to a moderator, and with the same diligent attention to order, each seeming desirous to record everything that was said. This went on by the propounding of any question or difficulty which had occurred during the day, addressed to him who had opened the subject, or to any other able to resolve it: and so we proceeded till towards eleven o'clock, when the whole duties of the day were concluded by the singing of a hymn, and the offering up of an evening prayer. Such were the six days we spent under the holy and hospitable roof of Albury House, within the chime of the church bell, and surrounded by the most picturesque and beautiful forms of nature. But the sweetest spot was that council-room where I met the servants of the Lord—the wise virgins waiting with oil in their lamps for the Bridegroom; and a sweeter still was that secret chamber where I met in the spirit my Lord and Master, whom I hope soon to meet in the flesh."

And upon this the warm emotions of the preacher burst forth into verse—verse less melodious and full of poetry than his ordinary diction, but not less the expression of those high-pitched and lyrical climaxes of feeling which naturally find utterance in rhythm and cadence. The narrative, however, which Irving gives in such detail, redeems the singular assembly out of that oblivion into which it and its proceedings have since fallen. What their deliberations were, or the results of them, is neither important to this history, nor is the present writer qualified to enter into such a subject. They who had set their chiefest hopes upon the personal appearance of our Lord, at a period which some actually fixed, and all regarded as close at hand, looked also, as a necessary preliminary of that appearance, for a personal development of evil, more remarkable and decided than anything that had preceded it; and had so identified and concluded upon the source from which this Antichrist was to come, that the ruin of the First Napoleon, and the death of his harmless and unfortunate son, had so much effect upon one, at least, of the disappointed expounders of prophecy, as, when fact could no longer be contradicted, to bring an illness upon him. This gentleman, as common rumour reports, first declared that it could not be, and then "took to his bed" in dire disappointment and distress.

This meeting, Irving tells us, delayed the completion and publication of the book which had cost him so much toil; but it was after all only the January of 1827, when that laborious performance, with the long preface, which occupies half of an octavo volume, and is one of his finest and most characteristic productions, was "offered to the Church." I can find no evidence of the amount of favour which *Ben-Ezra* and his work attained in the Church; but the translator's preface has been often quoted, and was re-printed in a separate form, along

with some other of Irving's shortest and least-known publications, a few years ago, by some of his admirers in Glasgow.

Early in 1827, the church in Regent Square—over the building of which Irving and his congregation had watched so lovingly, and which was to deliver them from the crowds and commotion of the little Caledonian Chapel—was at last completed. At the time of its erection, it was considered the handsomest church not belonging to the Establishment (for the Presbyterians of that day, proud of their National Church, and connection with the Scotch Establishment, would have done anything sooner than allow themselves to be called Dissenters) in London. One thousand sittings were taken at the time of its opening; and the excellent William Hamilton writes, in all the pious joy of a church official, about the "gratifying success" which had attended the opening services, at which Dr Chalmers officiated. "Dr Chalmers," writes Mr Hamilton, sending the newspapers which contained an account of these services, along with his own joyful description, to his future wife, the sister-in-law of Irving, in Kirkcaldy manse, "was so highly pleased with his stay among us, that he spontaneously offered to pay us an annual visit. He has complied with our request to publish the sermon he preached at the opening, which contained a powerful defence of our excellent pastor, and a most eloquent eulogium on his extraordinary talents, piety, and worth, which was not a little gratifying to the congregation, but gall and wormwood to some of his enemies who were present." On the evening of the same Sunday, Dr Gordon of Edinburgh, another old and tried friend of Irving, preached; and with the highest auguries of increase and prosperity—relieved from the inconveniences of popularity, which they had felt so deeply, and able at last to appear, not in relays, but as a body together,—the congregation into which the fifty worshippers of Hatton Garden had grown entered into quiet possession of the handsome church for which they had laboured and longed. "Both Dr Gordon and Dr Chalmers," says the affectionate witness we have just quoted, "love our friend, and bore a noble testimony to him in public and in private wherever they went. . . . . Our session now consists of seven elders and seven deacons—all, I believe, sincerely devoted to the good cause; and I am happy to say that the most perfect harmony prevails amongst us, and indeed throughout the congregation."

Such were the domestic circumstances of the community over which Irving presided. Inspired by his fervid teaching,

they believed themselves established there to carry out "a work which is likely to be the means, in God's hand, of greatly advancing the spiritual interests of our countrymen in the metropolis." By this time already many of the sermons which were afterwards found out to be heretical, had been preached and listened to with equal unconsciousness of any divergence from the orthodox faith; and the unanimity of regard and admiration with which the people clung to their leader had been as yet rather strengthened than diminished by anything that had been alleged against him. The long services, in which he would not be curtailed; his perpetual determination, notwithstanding the overflowing of human kindness in his heart, to be among them the priest, the pastor, the spiritual guide, and not the companion and friend alone; the high position he assumed, and the uncompromising distinctness of his attacks upon all the special forms of evil, had neither lessened the confidence nor weakened the affection of his adherents. People who steadily, and not capriciously according to the dictates of fashion, resorted to the teaching of a man who kept them nearly three hours at a stretch, Sunday after Sunday, plunged in the deepest questions of religion—sometimes maintained the strain of an argument which ascended into the secret places of the Trinity, unfathomable mystery—sometimes stirred with appeals and exhortations which excited the multitude into all but open outcry, must indeed have been under the sway of a fascination seldom exercised, and of which few men know the secret. The thousand souls, who at its earliest commencement declared their allegiance to the preacher in his new church, had suffered this test of their sincerity; and were unanimous, harmonious, objecting neither to his long sermons, nor to his orthodoxy. But other sentiments had begun to dawn upon other men.

Dr Chalmers, always doubtful, puzzled, but admiring, never knowing what to make of this genius, which he could not choose but acknowledge, yet which was so different from his own, and in some respects so incomprehensible to it—Dr Chalmers writes from London to his wife, with the same half-wondering, half-comprehending regard which was visible in almost everything he said of Irving, as follows:—

"*7th May.*—Mr Irving made his appearance and took me to his house, where I drank tea. Mr Miller and Mr Maclean, Scottish ministers of the London Presbytery, were there. Their talk is very much of meetings and speeches. Irving, though, is very impressive, and I do like the force and richness of his conversation. . . . . Studied about two hours,

and then proceeded to take a walk with James.* We had just gone out when we met Mr Irving. He begged of James the privilege of two or three hours in his house, to study a sermon. I was vastly tickled with this new instance of the inroads of Scotsmen; however, James could not help himself, and was obliged to consent. We were going back to a family dinner, and I could see the alarm that was felt on the return of the great Mr Irving, who was very easily persuaded to join us at dinner, and the study was all put to flight. There was not a single sentence of study all the time; and notwithstanding Mrs C——'s alarm about the shabbiness of the dinner, everything went on most delightfully. Irving intermingled the serious and the gay, took a good, hearty repast, and really charmed even James himself, so that I was very glad of the inroad that had been made upon him. *Thursday.*—Irving and I went to Bedford Square. Mr and Mrs Montagu took us out in their carriage to Highgate, where we spent three hours with the great Coleridge. His conversation flowed in a mighty unremitting stream. You know that Irving sits at his feet, and drinks in the inspiration of every syllable that falls from him. There is a secret and, to me, unintelligible communion of spirit between them, on the ground of a certain German mysticism, and transcendental lake poetry which I am not yet up to. *Friday.*—Mr Irving conducted the preliminary services in the National Church. There was a prodigious want of tact in the length of his prayers—forty minutes; and altogether it was an hour and a half from the commencement of the service ere I began..... The dinner took place at five o'clock. Many speeches. Irving certainly errs in the outrunning of sympathy.

The length of this preliminary service seems to have troubled the great Scotch preacher mightily. He appears to have felt, with true professional disgust, the wearing out of that audience which properly belonged, not to Irving, but to himself. Long after, he recurs to the same incident in a conversation with Mr J. J. Gurney. "I undertook to open Irving's new church in London," says the discontented divine. "The congregation, in their eagerness to obtain seats, had already been assembled three hours. Irving said he would assist me by reading a chapter for me. *He chose the longest in the Bible*, and went on for an hour and a half. On another occasion he offered me the same aid, adding, 'I can be short.' I said, 'How long will it take you?' 'Only an hour and forty minutes.'"

Such an indiscretion was likely to go to the heart of the waiting preacher. Dr Chalmers never seems to have forgotten that impatient interval, during which he had to sit by silent, and see his friend take the bloom of expectation off the audience, which had come not to hear Irving, but Chalmers. In

* A brother of Doctor Chalmers, noted, as all the readers of his biography will remember, for a certain kind churlishness, and special terror of the encroachments of Scotch visitors, and the universal entertainment and introductory letters required by them.

all his after-remarks, a reminiscence of his own sore experience recurs. On the following Saturday, he records that "Mr Gordon informed me that yesternight Mr Irving preached on his prophecies at Hackney chapel for two hours and a half; and though very powerful, yet the people were dropping away. I really fear lest his prophecies, and the excessive length and weariness of his services, may unship him altogether, and I mean to write to him seriously on the subject."

This was the impression of a stranger, unaware of the long training by which Irving had accustomed his people to these prolonged addresses; and also of an elder, and—so far as experience went—superior in the Church, who was slow to forget that "the great Mr Irving" had once been his own nameless assistant and subordinate. With dissatisfied and doubtful eyes, the celebrated Scotch preacher contemplated the apparently brilliant and encouraging position of his friend. The practicable, which did not trouble Irving, was strongly present in the mind of Chalmers. He, with both feet planted steadily on the common soil, cast a troubled eye upon the soaring spirit which scorned the common restraints of possibility. He shakes his head as he tells his wife of the mingled fascination and imprudence visible to himself in this incomprehensible man. Chalmers, too, was capable of following one idea with the most absorbing enthusiasm; but his ideas were those of statesmanship, practicable, and to be worked out; and with the eyes of a wisdom which, if not worldly, was at least substantial, and fully aware of all the restrictions of humanity, he looked on doubtfully at a man who calculated no possibilities, and who estimated the capacities of human nature, not from among the levels of ordinary life, but from the mountain-top of his own elevated and impassioned spirit. Dr Chalmers shook his head. What else could a man of reason and ordinary prudence do? Nothing could be certainly predicated of such a career as that which, under changed circumstances, made now a new, and to all appearance, prosperous beginning. Triumph or ruin might be beyond; scarcely the steady progress and congregational advancement, which is the only advancement in life open to the hopes of an orthodox Scotch minister. Such a progress, happy but uneventful—a yearly roll of additional members, perhaps a hundred pounds or so of additional income, a recognized place on the platform of Exeter Hall—was not a natural vaticination of the future course of Edward Irving; and over anything else, what could Chalmers—what could any other sober-minded clerical spectator do otherwise than shake his head? Something was like to come of it too far out of the ordinary course to yield ordinary

comfort or happiness; and I don't doubt that Chalmers returned to Scotland alarmed and uneasy, comprehending as little what would be the end, as he entered into the thoughts and emotions which were bringing that end about.

And, indeed, it was a crisis of no small importance. Up to this time, the preacher and his congregation had been in exceptional circumstances. They had never been able to make experiment of that calm congregational existence. Crowded out of the little Caledonian Chapel for years, their hopes had gone forward to that new church which was to be a kind of national centre in the noisy capital, and the completion of which was to open the way to a great and extended mission. It was only natural that all the projects and hopes both of leader and people should fix upon that place as the scene of result and issue to their great labours. Doubtless they did so unawares. For years the preacher had been used to see round him an unusual exceptional crowd, drawn out of all regions, necessarily unsteady and fluctuating—a crowd which he could charm and thrill and overawe for the moment, but out of which few results could be visible. Now was the time to test what had been done in that flattering overflow of popular admiration. If, as Carlyle says, "hopes of a new moral reformation" had fired the preacher's heart—if, with the flattered expectation of a popular idol, he was watching to see the "sons of Mammon, and high sons of Belial and Beelzebub, become sons of God, and the gum-flowers of Almack's to be made living roses in a new Eden"—now was the time to test that dream. The tiny chapel where celebrities could not be overlooked, and where the crowd never could lessen—first chapter and preparatory stage of the history—was now left in the quiet of the past; and with full space to collect and receive all who sought him, and the highest expectations and hopes of now seeing the fruits of his labour, Irving entered that new temple, whence a double blessing was to descend upon his people's prayers. If fashion had crazed him with her momentary adulation, here was the critical point at which fashions and he parted; the beginning of a disenchantment which, next to personal betrayal, is perhaps the hardest experience in the world.

This has been accepted by many—and asserted by one who knew him thoroughly, and from whose judgment I know not how to presume to differ—as the secret cause of all the darker shadows and perplexing singularities of his later life. I am as little able to cope with Mr Carlyle in philosophic insight as I am in personal knowledge; I can only take my appeal to Irving himself in the singular journal which has already been given. If that record shows any trace of a man whose heart

has been caught in the meshes of the social enchantress; if he looks to have Circe's cup in his hand as he goes pondering through those streets of Bloomsbury and Pentonville, or with anxious care and delicacy visits the doubtful believer in Fleet Market, and comforts the sorrowful souls who seek his kindness in the nameless lanes of the city, I am willing to allow that this was the influence that set his mind astray. But if the readers of this history are as unable as myself to perceive any trace of that intoxication—an intoxication too well known in all its symptoms, and too often seen to be recognized with difficulty—another clue may be reasonably required for this mystery. I can find no evidence whatever, except in what he himself says in the dedication of his Sermons to Mr Basil Montagu, of even a tendency on Irving's part to be carried away by that brilliant social stream. He speaks of himself there as "being tempted to go forth, in the simplicity of my heart, into those high and noble circles of society which were then open to me, and which must either have engulfed me by their enormous attractions, or else repelled my simple affections, shattered and befooled, to become the mockery and contempt of every envious and disappointed railer." But that was at the earliest period of his London experience. The master of the Pentonville household, with all its quaint and simple economics, with its domestic services, frequented not by the great, and its stream of homely guests—the faithful priest, exercising all the human courtesies and Christian tendernesses of his nature to win a sullen London errand-boy, or convince a sceptic of the humblest ranks—who is not to be moved by the representations even of his anxious elders to shorten his services by half-an-hour, or adapt himself to the necessities of his popularity,—is, on his own evidence, the most unlike a man carried away and crazed by the worship of Fashion that can be conceived. If he had been such a man, here was the sickening moment when the syren visibly went her way. The crowd that fluctuated in the tiny aisles of the Caledonian Chapel, and presented the preacher with a wonderful, suggestive, moving panorama of the great world without, which he addressed through these thronged and ever-changing faces, settled into steady identity in Regent Square. The throng ceased in that spacious interior. Those mists of infinitude cleared off from the permanent horizon—"Fashion went her idle way," Mr Carlyle says: indisputably the preacher must have learned that he was no longer addressing the world, the nation, the great capital of the world, but a certain clearly definable number of its population—a congregation, in short, and not an age.

This great change happened to Irving at the moment when he had apparently arrived at the beginning of his harvest-time. The office-bearers of his church found the fruit they sought in the roll of seat-holders and communicants, the visible increase which had promoted them from the Caledonian Chapel to the National Scotch church. But to the preacher the effect must have been wonderfully different—as different as reality always is from expectation. At the end of that uncertain, brilliant probation which seemed to promise results the most glorious, he woke and found himself at the head of a large congregation. It was all his friends could have wished for him—the highest amount of external success which his Church acknowledged. But it was an indifferent climax to the lofty hopes of the great evangelist. Yet this great shock and crisis seems to have been encountered and got through unconsciously, with no such effects as might have been anticipated. There is, indeed, no evidence that Irving was himself aware when he passed out of that wide horizon of hope and possibility, into the distinct field laid out for him under the smoky canopy of London sky. Yet here is the evident point when that transition happened. The wide popular current ebbed away from the contracted ways of Hatton Garden, and subsided into a recognisable congregation in Regent Square. "The church was always well filled, but no longer crowded," says the calm official retrospect of the present community belonging to that church. Fashion then and there took her departure; but so far from plunging into wild attempts to re-attract her fickle devotion, the preacher seems to have gone on unconscious, without even being aware of what had happened to him. Years intervened, and the fervent beginnings of thought—then only appearing in a firmament where the hidden lights came out one by one, all unforeseen by the eager gazer till they startled him with sudden illuminations—came to developments never unaccordant with the nature that produced them, though mysterious and often sad enough to the calm looker-on, before the world which had subsided out of its frenzy of admiration was tempted to return into a frenzy of curiosity and wonder. In the meantime, Irving's sober-minded Scottish friends left him in his new beginning with alarms and uneasy forebodings, not that he would peril his understanding in attempts to retain his popularity, but that the unmanageable sublimation and prophet-spirit of the man, inaccessible as they felt it to all such motives, would ruin his popularity altogether.

Some years before two silver salvers had been presented to Irving by the grateful office-bearers of the Scotch church in

Liverpool. When the National Scotch church was opened, he presented them, with an impulse of natural munificence, for the service of the house of God. Everybody at all acquainted with the usages of the Church of Scotland must be aware of the collection made weekly at the doors of every place of worship—a collection entirely voluntary, yet so thorough "an institution," that, to an old-fashioned Scotsman, the fact of passing "the plate" without depositing a coin in it, would be something like a petty crime. The fund thus collected is entitled the Session Fund, and is in parish churches appropriated to the relief of the poor; and it was from this fund alone that Chalmers, in the day of his reign in Glasgow, provided for the poor of his parish, and abolished pauperism in St John's. Irving designed his silver salvers for the reception of this weekly bounty, and presented them to the church on the day of its opening, engraven with the following inscription:—

"These two plates I send to the National Scotch church, London, on this the 11th of May, 1827, the day of its opening, that they may stand on each side of the door to receive the offerings for the Poor, and all other gifts of the congregation of the LORD in all time coming while He permits. And if at any time, which God forbid, the fountain of the people's charity should be dried up, and the Poor of the Lord's house be in want of bread, or His house itself under any restraint of debt, I appoint that they shall be melted into shillings and sixpences, for the relief of the same, so far as they will go.

"EDWARD IRVING, A.M., V.D.M.
"Minister of the National Scotch Church, London."

Irving's purpose, I am sorry to say, was not carried out. The elders, more prudent and less splendid than he, imagined or discovered that the show of the silver at the door of the church, even though watched over by two of their members, would be too great a temptation to the clever thieves about. Irving's salvers were altogether withdrawn from the office of receiving the pennies and sixpences of the congregation, and were placed, where they still remain, among the communion plate of the church in Regent Square.

The only public appearance which he is recorded to have made at this period was at one of the field days of the long and warm intestine war which at that time was raging in the Bible Society. The conduct of that Society generally had not been agreeable to Irving. Going to the meetings of its London Committee as to the assembling of a body of men engaged in the service of religion, he had been at once chilled and startled by the entirely secular nature of their proceedings. When he remonstrated,

he was answered that they were not missionaries, but booksellers ; and this was doubtless one of the points at which the vulgar *business* and bustling secularity of the religious world disgusted a man who had nothing whatever to do with a mere community of booksellers, nor could understand why the Church's interest should be specially claimed for such. His indignation and protest on this point, however, were private ; the controversy was a public one, and had now lasted for many years. The question was whether or not the Apocrypha should be issued along with the canonical Scriptures as a part of the Bible, which the Society professed themselves commissioned to spread throughout the world. The warmest interest had been excited in religious circles generally, and especially in Scotland, by this dispute. North of the Tweed the Apocrypha has always been held in particular abhorrence, and the idea of supporting, by their labours and subscriptions, a Society which sent forth this spurious revelation along with the canon of Scripture, roused the pugnacious kingdom into a blaze of displeasure and resistance. The Society at its head-quarters stood out stoutly ; why, it seems impossible to find out, unless by an instinct of self-assertion and controversy ; and it was not until the whole community was in commotion, and a serious secession threatened, that the London Committee came to its senses. Just at the moment when it was about to do so, at the Anniversary Meeting held in May, 1827, Irving made his appearance in the place of meeting. His entrance created a commotion which interrupted the business—the general public, apparently, having by this time come to understand that this man could not be regarded with calm impartiality, but must either be loved or hated. The tumult raised on his appearance naturally aroused the orator to assert himself, and, independently of the timid authority of the chair, to make himself heard. It is difficult, in the vague account given, to find out what "motion" it was that Irving supported, or what was accomplished by the forgotten assembly, whose cheers and hisses would have long ago passed into oblivion, but for the presence of that unusual champion. With a straightforward manfulness and simplicity which look quaint and out of place upon such a platform, and which must have been wonderfully confusing to the minds of the Society, he advises them to "acknowledge that they are exceedingly sorry." And when this suggestion is received with mingled hisses and applause, he indignantly asks, "Is there any member of the Church of England—is there any consistent Protestant Dissenter—who would think it at all degrading to him to acknowledge himself in error when he felt he was so, and when

so doing would heal the wounds which had been inflicted thereby, and so unite a whole Christian Church to the Society? Would it be at all degrading to the Committee to say that it was sorry that that which is not the Word of God had been (say unwittingly, or unwarily, I mind not the word) mixed up and circulated with the Book of God? Let them, I say, record that which they have individually expressed by word of mouth —that that which is not the Bread of Life has been sent out to the world as the Bread of Life, and that they are sorry!" The answer which the Bible Society or its Committee gave to this appeal is not recorded. But Irving triumphantly overcame the opposition against his own appearance, and retired from the meeting, which he did immediately after his speech, amid universal applause.

In the meantime, his private family story went on, amid the clouds which, having once descended, so often continue to overshadow the early history of a household. In the same spring, another infant, a short-lived little Mary, came to a house saddened by the long and serious illness of the mother. In the depression occasioned by this interruption of domestic comfort, Irving writes, in a mood certainly not habitual, but from which such a temperament as his can never be severed:

"For myself, I feel the burden of sin so heavily, and the unprofitableness of this vexed life, that I long to be delivered from it, and would gladly depart when the Lord may please: yet, while He pleaseth, I am glad to remain for His Church's sake. What I feel for myself, I feel for my dear wife, whom I love as myself. And at present my rejoicing is, that she is able to praise Him in the furnace of trial and the fire of affliction."

The little Mary died in December of the same year. Though the second blow does not seem to have struck like the first, it deepened the channel of those personal tears first wrung from Irving's eyes by the death of his little Edward; and quickened into pathetic adoration his thankfulness for the almost revelation, as he believed it, which had thrown light upon that doctrine of Baptism, henceforth to be held as one of the brightest comforting inspirations of his life. The volume of *Lectures on Baptism*, in which he set before the Church the views which had been so consolatory to his own heart, was prefaced by a touching dedication:

"To Isabella Irving, my wife, and the mother of my two departed children."

The volumes thus inscribed were not published till 1828; but they belong to this period of much quiet, but many emotions,

which lay between the death of his two children. He laboured much, and pondered more, during these two years. They were the seed-time of a great and melancholy harvest; and, containing, as they did, the first germs of those convictions which he afterwards carried so far, and the adjuncts of which carried him still farther, they are full of interest in the history of his life. The Albury conference, which drew him into the close and exciting intercourse of a brotherhood engrossed with hopes and expectations unshared by the common world, and the opening of his church, which brought him suddenly out of the brilliant, indefinite world of possibility into a certain position, restricted by visible limits of the real, were, perhaps, equally operative in preparing his mind for all that dawned upon it. What that was, and how it began to develope, may be better treated in another chapter.

One of the most noble pieces of oratory which Irving ever produced,—the *Ordination Charge*, which reads like an ode of the most thrilling and splendid music,—was delivered in this spring at the ordination of the Rev. Hugh Maclean to the charge of the Scots church, London Wall. It is a kind of satisfaction to know that the man so magnificently addressed —in a strain to which perhaps no Scotch minister, and few priests of any description, have ever been called to listen—had soul enough to follow the leader, who charged him to his duty as one hero might another, out into the conflicts and troubles of his after-life. Such an appeal must have thrilled to the heart of any man capable of being moved to high emotions. I am not aware that any similar ode has ever embellished the ordination service of any other church than that which Irving here describes as "the most severe and uncompromising" of all Christian churches. It is an unrivalled outburst, full of all the lyric varieties and harmonies of a great poem, and must have fallen with startling effect upon the commonplace ears of a quiet company of ministers, no man among whom, except the speaker, had ever distinguished himself, or had a chance of distinguishing himself. Such an address might have given a climax to the vocation of a heaven-born preacher; but it is only the genius capable of being roused to the utmost by such an appeal that is ever able to offer it; and the heroic strain called forth no answering wonder. But the young preacher to whom it was addressed threw his humble fortunes, in after-days, into the same lot as that of his instructor in the office of the ministry; and one feels a certain comfort in knowing that the disciple was faithful to the master who had connected

his unknown name with an address which inferred such noble qualities in him who could receive it.

Later in the year, Irving made a short visit to Leicester, to see his friend Mr Vaughan, with whom, and with "some other ministers of the Church of England there," we hear that "he had some delightful intercourse." "He was expressing to me yesterday," writes William Hamilton, "how much he had been gratified by the harmony which prevailed, and the exact coincidence of their views on almost all the important points which they discussed." The same writer goes on to tell how Irving had visited with him the families under his own charge as an elder, and of "the cordial reception they everywhere met with." "Mr Irving is very happy and successful on these occasions," writes his admiring friend, "and it is very delightful to see such harmony and good feeling amongst the members." Thus, undeterred by the many absorbing subjects of thought which were rising to his mind—by the engrossing prophetical studies which Dr Chalmers feared would "unship him altogether"—or even by the impatience and almost disgust which often assailed his own spirit in sight of the indifferent and unimpressible world, he pursued all the varieties of his immediate duty, carrying through it all a certain elevation and lofty tone which never interfered with the human loving-kindness in which all his brethren had a share. Notwithstanding his unsparing condemnation of evil and worldliness, Irving had so much of the "celestial light" in his eyes, that he unconsciously assigned to everybody he addressed a standing-ground in some degree equal to his own. The "vision splendid" attended him not only through his morning course, but throughout all his career. The light around him never faded into the light of common day. Unawares he addressed the ordinary individuals about him as if they, too, were heroes and princes;—charged the astounded yet loyal-hearted preacher, who could but preach, and visit, and do the other quiet duties of an ordinary minister, to be at once an apostle, a gentleman, and a scholar;—made poor, astonished women, in tiny London apartments, feel themselves ladies in the light of his courtesy;—and unconsciously elevated every man he talked with into the ideal man he ought to have been. This *glamour* in his eyes had other effects, melancholy enough to contemplate; but even though it procured him trouble and suffering, I cannot find it in my heart to grudge Irving a gift so noble. The harm that comes by such means is neutralized by a power of conferring dignity and happiness, possessed by very few in the common world.

CHAPTER XIII.

1828.

THE year 1828 commenced amid those domestic shadows, and had not progressed far before the public assaults, in which Irving's life was henceforward to be passed, began. In the early beginning of the year he had prepared for publication three volumes of his collected sermons; the first volume setting forth the very heart and essence of his teaching, his lofty argument and exposition of the Trinity, and its combined action in the redemption of man; the second, his conception of the manner of applying Divine truth as symbolized in the Parable of the Sower; and the third, his views on national and public subjects. When this work, however, was all but ready for the press, one of the spies of orthodoxy hit upon a grand and unthought of heresy, in the splendid expositions which the congregation had received without a suspicion, and which Irving himself had preached with the fullest conviction that the sentiments he uttered were believed by all orthodox Christians. Up to this period his works had been arraigned before less solemn tribunals; failures in taste, confusion of metaphors, and an incomprehensible and undiminishable popularity, which no attack could lessen, and which piqued the public oracles, had been brought against him, one time or another, by almost every publication in the kingdom. But even when a man is fully convicted of being more eloquent and less cautious than his neighbours, when he is proved to fascinate the largest audiences, and utter the boldest denunciations, and give the most dauntless challenges to all opponents, with the additional aggravations of a remarkable person, and some peculiarities of appearance, these things are still not enough to make him a heretic.

The religious world had long been shy of a man so impracticable; but yet had been forced, by way of availing itself of his genius and popularity, to afford him still its countenance, and still to ask anniversary sermons, though with fear and trembling, from the greatest orator of the time. These anniversary sermons, however, were so little to be depended upon —were so much occupied with the truth, and so little with the occasion, or the subscription lists—that he was not, and could not be, popular among the religious managers and committee people, who make a business of the propagation of the gospel. He was a man of a different fashion from their favourite model,

by no means to be brought into conformity with it; and they regarded him afar off with jealous eyes. At last the inevitable collision occurred. Irving's sermons on the Trinity were uttered to an audience so unaware of any error in them that, by special desire of the office-bearers of the congregation, they were placed first in the volumes which their author prepared as a complete manifestation of his varied labours. The sermons themselves had been preached some years before; they are mentioned in *Fraser's Magazine*, in the *éloge* pronounced upon him after his death, as having been first delivered in Hatton Garden, where no man hinted heresy; and Irving himself describes the gradual composition of several of them in his journal-letters in 1825; they were not, however, ready for publication till the beginning of the year 1828; and seem to have been selected in all simplicity, and, as the preface relates, with no controversial meaning, "as being designed for the instruction of the church committed to my ministerial and pastoral care, of whom I knew not that any one entertained a doubt upon that great head of Christian faith." These sermons, though of a very different character from those bursts of bold and splendid oratory by which the preacher had made his great reputation, are perhaps more remarkable than any of his other productions. How any man could carry a large audience breathless through those close and lofty arguments, and lead them into the solemn courts of heaven to trace the eternal covenant there, preserving the mighty strain of intelligence and attention through hours of steadfast soaring into the ineffable mysteries, is a question which I find it hard to solve. But he seems to have done it; and all unaware of the fact that underneath, in the cloudy world below, certain sharp eyes, unable to follow *him*, could yet follow and discern where his brilliant way cut through divers floating clouds of doctrine, he pursued his eagle's path straight into the sunshine. But there were other eyes and thoughts in the cloudy regions underneath, watching that lofty perilous career into the Divine mysteries, without either light to lead, or faith to follow. An idle clergyman, called Cole,—of whom nobody seems to know anything but that he suddenly appeared out of darkness at this moment to do his ignoble office,—heard by the wind of rumour, which at that time was constantly carrying something of the eloquent preacher's lavish riches about the world, of what appeared to him "a new doctrine." The immediate cause was an address delivered by Irving in behalf of a society for the distribution of Gospel Tracts, in which some of his audience discovered that the preacher declared the human nature of our Saviour to be identical with

all human nature, truly and in actual verity the "seed of Abraham." This, coming to the ears of Mr Cole, apparently, at the moment, a man at leisure, and in a condition to set his laborious brethren right and find out their errors, filled the soul of that virtuous critic with alarm and horror. To him the world seems to be indebted for the disingenuous statement of this new view, if new view it was, which, by giving the name of the "sinfulness of Christ's human nature" to that which in Irving's eyes was the actual redemption of human nature through Christ, inevitably prejudiced and prejudged the question with the mass of religious people. Few can follow those fine and delicate intricacies and distinctions which encompass such an important but impalpable difference of belief; but everybody can be shocked at the connection of sin with the person of the Saviour. This was the unfair and deeply disingenuous method of representing it, which Cole first hit upon, and which all who followed him on that side of the question, in spite of countless protests and denials from the other, obstinately maintained. The novel means which Mr Cole took to satisfy himself about the new doctrine we are fortunately able to give in his own words, which, in the form of a letter to Irving, he published shortly after the event he narrates.

"I had purposed," says this candid divine, "ever since the delivery of your Society Oration, to hear you myself, that I might be satisfied personally whether you really did hold the awful doctrine of *the sinfulness of Christ's human nature or not;* but six months elapsed before my continued purpose was realized. I did not like to leave my usual place of worship to hear you; and yet there appeared no possibility of accomplishing my desire without it. On Sunday evening, the 28th of October last, however, I was returning home rather early, about eight o'clock; and it occurred to me that, if I went to your chapel, I might find your oration not quite concluded; and that I might, perhaps, hear something that would enable me to arrive at the desired satisfaction. I accordingly proceeded to the Caledonian Chapel. When I entered, I found your oration not concluded: I therefore sat down, and heard you for about twenty minutes. I had not been seated above a minute or two, when I found that you were dwelling much upon the person and work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and I had hardly arrived at a perception of the train of that part of your discourse, when you made me tremble from head to foot by thundering out the expression, 'THAT SINFUL SUBSTANCE!' meaning the human body of the adorable Son of God! You were declaring 'That the main part of His victory consisted in His overcoming the sin and corruption of His human nature.' You stated, 'He did *not* sin.' 'But,' you said, 'there was that sinful substance against which He had to strive, and with which he had to conflict during the whole of His life upon earth.' What I felt at hearing such awful blasphemy against the person of the Son of God, declaimed with

accompanying vehement gesticulations, before upwards, I should suppose, of two thousand persons, I cannot describe. And the whole superstructure of the remaining part of your oration was more or less of a piece with and built upon this terrifically awful foundation. . . . . Nevertheless, to put myself beyond the reach of error, in so momentous a matter, and at the same time to give you the most fair and full opportunity of unsaying any unguarded expressions, and also to ascertain whether what you uttered was your considerate and real belief, I resolved, if practicable, to speak to you in person. Having understood from one of your attendants that you would favour me with a conference, I waited till you were disengaged, and was at length admitted into your presence. My address and questions, and your answers, were as follows :—'I believe, sir, a considerable part of the conclusion of your discourse this evening has been upon the person and works of Jesus Christ?' You answered in the affirmative. I added, "If I mistake not, you asserted that the human body of Christ was sinful substance?' You replied, 'Yes, I did.' I continued, 'But is that your real and considerate belief?' You answered, 'Yes, it is, as far as I have considered the subject.' And here you produced a book, which, I believe, was some national confession of faith, to confirm your faith and assertions, in which you pointed out to me these words (if I mistake not), 'The flesh of Jesus Christ, which was by nature mortal and corruptible.' . . . . 'This, sir,' I observed, 'is to me a most awful doctrine.' And after making other remarks upon the awfulness of the doctrine, and asking you once or twice if such was your deliberate and considerate belief, which you answered in the affirmative, I put this final question to you, 'Do you then, sir, really believe that the body of the Son of God was a mortal, corrupt, and corruptible body, like that of all mankind?—the same body as yours and mine?' You answered, 'Yes, just so; certainly; that is what I believe.' Upon which I departed."

The inquirer departed, after so unwarrantable an invasion of another man's privacy, to bring against the sincere and patient preacher who had borne this catechising, and had not resented it, the charge of serious heresy. Such a method of getting at the facts on which the indictment was to be framed has fortunately been seldom resorted to; and it is not an example which many men would like to follow. Irving himself gives a much shorter account of the same interview in the preface to a volume entitled *Christ's Holiness in the Flesh*, published in 1831. He says :—

"Of the man I know nothing, save that a stranger once solicited conversation with me on a Lord's-day night, after public worship, of which conversation I found what purported to be the substance standing at the head of this publication (Cole's pamphlet). Whether it be so or not I cannot tell, for it was at a moment of exhaustion that it was held; and I gave the stranger an invitation to come to me at leisure on the Thursday following, for the further satisfying of his conscience. He did not think it worth his while to do this; and could reconcile his con-

science to the betrayal of pastoral and ministerial confidence, and to the publication of a conversation, without even asking me whether it was correctly reported or not. . . . I shall never forget," he proceeds, "the feeling which I had upon first hearing my name coupled with heresy. So much did it trouble me, that I once seriously meditated sending a paper to the *Christian Observer*, in order to contradict the man's false insinuations. But I thought it better to sit quiet and bear the reproach. When, however, I perceived that this error was taking form, and that the Church was coming into peril of believing that Christ had no temptations in the flesh to contend with and overcome, I felt it my duty to intercalate, in the volume on the Incarnation, a sermon (No. III.), showing out the truth in a more exact and argumentative form, directed specially against the error that our Lord took human nature in its creation, and not in its fallen estate. And another (No. VI.), showing the most grave and weighty conclusions flowing from the true doctrine, that He came under the conditions of our fallen state in order to redeem us from the same. This is the true and faithful account of the first work which I published upon the subject."

Such was the simple and straightforward course adopted by Irving at the first whisper of the accusation brought against him. Instead of rushing into sudden encounter with his darkling assailant, he waited until nearly the end of the year, in order to add to the plain statement of his belief its fuller defence and support—and after adding these careful productions to the already printed volume, issued it, with the explanation given above, without even referring to the obscure originator of the sudden outcry. The dedication to the third volume of this work is dated January 10th, 1828, while the similar preface to the first is not written till November 10th of the same year, ten months later. The difference of these dates bears notable and simple testimony to the way in which this matter affected him. The work, prepared with all care and deliberation, and just on the eve of being given to the world, was postponed, not that he might soften down or clear away the doubtful expressions, but that, with more distinct force and clearer utterance, he might disclose the belief that was in him. Having no doubt in himself, he was only anxious to be understood clearly, that his doctrine might be proved. In this patient and candid manner, not hastily, but with the postponement of all an author's expectations, and all the natural indignation of a man unhandsomely assailed, he answered this first charge of heresy. He himself bears witness that it was echoed on all sides around him. It was "a great outcry"—"a stir in divers quarters." He delayed answering for a year—a year so full of other occupations, that it is hard to conceive how he can have had the patience and composure necessary to take up

the threads and extend the high argument; and then soberly asserts his cherished truth and vindicates his character. "The point at issue is simply this," he says with dignified gravity and moderation, "whether Christ's flesh had the grace of sinlessness and incorruption from its proper nature, or from the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; I say the latter." With this statement of the matter, we may, in the meantime, like Irving, leave the question. The cloud, like a man's hand, had risen out of the envious mists, when the religious spy entered the little Presbyterian sacristy at Regent Square, to bring the ingenuous soul there to account, and betray its frank and unstudied explanations. All unconscious of the object of his questioner, Irving spoke forth the truth he held then as always; and when he became aware of the brewing storm, faced it, all candid and undisguisable, but with a patience and lofty composure which few men could have equalled. And with that for the present the matter closed. An angry wind of assault and accusation raged without; but within, his beloved church, always ready enough to note deviations in doctrine, was yet unroused and unstartled. And Irving went on his way, full not of one truth but of many—and believing himself, first and above all, called upon to proclaim the coming of that Lord whom he all but saw—the approach of One who was no abstraction nor embodiment of doctrine to his fervid spirit, but his very God and Lord, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone.

In the spring of the same year he preached a Fast-day Sermon, it is not recorded upon what occasion, before the Presbytery of London, which was afterwards published under the title of an *Apology for the Ancient Fulness and Purity of the Doctrine of the Church of Scotland.* This work I can only speak of from the fragments contained in an adverse and ill-natured review; but it was evidently not only a fervent eulogium on the mother Church, but an assertion of higher claims on her behalf than the so-called democratic and popular Church of Scotland is generally supposed to have ever made; and he seems to have founded his views, as Irving was always disposed to do, upon the ancient Confessions of the Church, and not upon the modern Westminster Confession, which is now its chief recognized standard. Upon these old Confessions he always made his stand, reaching across the controversial age to those ancient and loftier days when the primitive creed was set forth simply and without argument. There is, indeed, a certain wilful independence in the way in which he eludes all mention of the later declaration of doctrine which has been

identified with his church, and fixes his tenacious regard upon the elder utterance, which he never ceased to maintain, and quaintly inflicted upon his English disciples in after years with a pertinacity which would be amusing were it not deeply pathetic. "I do battle under the standards of the Church under which my fathers fell," he says with touching prophetic sadness in this Fast-day sermon. "I am a man sworn to discipline, and must abide by my standard, and may not leave it, but fall beside it, or fall above it, and yield to it the last shelter and rampart of my fallen body." These words were laughed at by some of the critics of the day as "mouth-valiant tropes." The progress of time, however, throws sad and striking illustrations upon them; for it is certain that, whether right or wrong in his interpretation of their meaning, Irving did stand by those standards till he fell in the heat of battle, and never relinquished them, even to the death.

In May, Mrs Irving, whose health was still delicate, went to Scotland to her father's house, and about the same time Irving himself left London to travel by the slower route of Annan and his native district, preaching as he went, to Edinburgh and Kirkcaldy. His object in this journey was not relaxation or pleasure. He went, counting himself "most favoured of the Lord," to proclaim in Scotland, as he had already done in London, the coming of his Master. "Walk, dear David, in the fear of the Lord—the time is short," he writes in one of those friendly letters, now becoming rarer and rarer. And penetrated with that conviction, he went to Scotland to warn, first his father's house and kindred, and the countryside which had still so great a hold upon his heart, and then universal Scotland through her capital, of that advent which he looked for with undoubting and fervent expectation. This journey was in many respects a very remarkable one, being occupied entirely in the work to which he had no inducement or persuasion but his own profound belief of the great event about to happen—of which, indeed, nobody can doubt that the world had, if it were so near at hand, most strenuous need to be advertised. No way could he have better proved the perfect reality of his own belief.

"Edward is in excellent health," writes Mrs Irving, on the 16th of May, from Kirkcaldy, to Mr Story, of Rosneath. "He has gone to bear his testimony for the truth in his native town, and purposes being in Dumfries, if the Lord will, next week, and to commence his labours in Edinburgh on Thursday next. . . . His time is wholly occupied. His course of discourses will not be finished in Edinburgh until Wednesday the 4th of June, when he proposes starting immediately for Glasgow, and, if they choose, preaching there on the following day. Then at

Paisley on Friday, at Greenock on the Saturday morning, and crossing to Rosneath and doing all service you may require on Sabbath and Monday. He desires much to preach for Mr Campbell on Tuesday evening, again at Glasgow on Wednesday, at Bathgate (my brother's parish) on Thursday, and be here at the communion on Sabbath, the 15th. All being well, on Tuesday after, we expect that your acquaintance, William Hamilton, will be united to my sister Elizabeth. After this, God willing, Edward visits Perth, Dundee, and Monimail."

Such was the course he had determined for himself before setting out from his labours in London; and when it is understood that he did this without inducement or stimulation, except that of the message with which he was bursting, something of the fervour of the spirit which could not keep silent may be apprehended. One joyful domestic incident—the marriage of his sister-in-law to his bosom friend, a marriage quaintly suggested years ago, before the pair had ever met, to the present bridegroom—gave a point of tender human interest to the laborious journey; but such a holiday few labouring men, few workers errant in such an agitating field as that of London, would have thought of, or could have carried out.

From the first point in these apostolic travels he writes as follows to his wife:—

"Annan, Saturday, 17th May, 1828.

"My dear Wife,—I arrived here on Wednesday night, and found all our friends well. Next morning I waited on the minister, who most graciously gave me my request to preach the three week nights as well as the Sabbath. This I published in the market, as I came down the street, and in the evening the church was thronged, as also last night. I opened the seventh chapter of Daniel, and the second and third of Acts, laying out the whole subject, and this night I open 2 Peter iii. and Revelations xix. and xx. Indeed, I have been most favoured of the Lord to open these great truths first in Scotland to my own kindred and townsmen, and in the church where I was baptized. To-morrow I preach at Kirkpatrick, in a tent, I suppose, when I intend throwing all help aside, and preaching a regular sermon from Rom. viii. 1—3, trusting to Christ's own most helpful and blessed promise. In the evening I return and preach for the Sabbath Schools; I know not what sermon yet; perhaps, however, it may be a discourse of baptism, from Rom. vi., embodying the doctrine of the homilies, and this also *extempore*. On Monday I proceed for Dumfries, resting a few hours with our Margaret, and proceeding thence to Cargen, to meet some clergymen there; but finding the minister of the parish to be my nearest of kin, I wrote a letter to him enclosed to Cargen, to say, that if he would gather the people after their work, at seven o'clock, I would preach to them. On Tuesday, at one o'clock, I preach for the Society; and in the evening, at seven, for Mr Kirkwood, at Holywood, if it please him; and then, on Wednesday morning, I proceed with Margaret to Edinburgh by the earliest coach.

. . . . These things I write that you may remember me at those seasons when I am engaged in the Lord's service. For it is the strength yielded unto the prayers of His saints which is my strength. I am nothing but a broken reed. I desire to be still viler in my sight. I am His worthless instrument, whom He will use for his own glory, either in saving me or in not saving me: and so that His glory is promoted I desire to be satisfied. Oft I have the feeling of the Apostle—lest I also be a castaway. God bless you and dear Margaret. . . . . The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be upon thee, and upon all the house of thy father. Farewell.

"Your affectionate husband,
"Edward Irving."

Thus labouring, he made his way through Dumfriesshire. The wonderful apparition of that great figure, with which Annan had grown unfamiliar, pausing in the street where the weekly market of the country town was going on, and proclaiming with audible voice to all the rural crowd of farmers and cottagers and homely country-merchants the night's preaching, is a scene well worthy any painter's skill. There where, as his old companions boast, no man has ever had "an ill word" to say of Edward Irving, he appeared out of the halo of distant metropolitan grandeur, familiar, yet strange, a distinction to his native town. The countryside, stirred with an impulse warmer than mere curiosity, arose and went to hear the message he brought them. On the Sunday when he preached, neighbouring ministers shut up their churches, and went the long Sabbath-day's journey, across the Annandale moors, to hear him, along with their people. Such a scene as Tennyson touches, with one wistful stroke of his magic pencil, must have been common enough in those days in that southland country. Many a countryman, roused by the sound of his old schoolfellow's name, like him who—

"In his furrow musing stands,
Does my old friend remember me?"

must have given his Sunday's leisure to listen to that voice which had no equal in Annandale. For once the proverb seems to have failed. He had honour in his own country, where gentle and simple flocked to hear him; and where, when the church would not contain his hearers, he preached in the open air from the little wooden pulpit, traditionally known as the "tent," to which, on extraordinary occasions, the rural ministers resorted. That he had been able to carry his message thus to his own people seems to have been a refreshment to Irving's heart.

Then he went on to Edinburgh, where he had already arranged to deliver twelve lectures on the Apocalypse. Here

he was to live in the house of Mr Bridges, now a friend of some years' standing, who lived in Great King Street, one of those doleful lines of handsome houses which weigh down the cheerful hill-side under tons of monotonous stone. The mistress of the house awaited in some trepidation the arrival of her distinguished guest, doubtful whether one, of whose eccentricities and solemnities everybody had heard, might be sufficiently of human mould to make him an agreeable visitor. She sent away her children hurriedly when she heard his arrival at the door, and listened with a little awe for his stately approach. But, while the mother stood palpitating by her drawing-room door, the children on the stairs encountered the stranger. He stood still immediately to greet them, to make himself acquainted with their names, and give them the blessing, without which he could not pass any head sufficiently low to have his hand of benediction laid upon it. I am not sure that one of them was not mounted aloft on the mighty altitude of his shoulder when he confronted the mother, alarmed no longer, and received the welcome, which came from no hesitating lip.

It was May, and the clergy of Scotland were all in Edinburgh. Of all times to deliver the message of Elias, this was the best time for the Presbyterian nation; and it was on that special account that Irving had chosen it. He began his lectures in St Andrew's Church at the extraordinary hour of six in the morning, in order to make sure of the ecclesiastical audience, busied all day in the affairs of the Church, which he particularly sought. In the sweet but chilly freshness of those spring mornings, a dense crowd filled the area of George Street. I have heard a clergyman of the mildest aspect and most courtly manners describe how, roused by the idea that favoured persons were being admitted by another entrance, he, despite all the proprieties of his clerical character and the suavities of his individual disposition, was so far roused as to threaten an official in attendance with a personal assault, and descent over the besieged railing, if admittance was not straightway afforded. Nothing in our day seems fit to be compared with that wonderful excitement. Half of the audience would on ordinary occasions have been peacefully reposing in their beds at the hour which saw them, all animated and anxious, pressing into the gloomy church. The very accompaniments which would have repelled them from another—his indifference to ordinary comforts and regulations—his selection of an hour, of all others least likely to

tempt forth the crowd—seem to have attracted them to Irving. Hosts of people cheerfully made themselves uncomfortable for the chance of getting admittance; and those who came, came not once, as to an unparalleled exhibition, but time after time, as unable to escape from the spell. "He is drawing prodigious crowds," Dr Chalmers writes. "We attempted this morning to force our way into St Andrew's Church; but it was all in vain. He changes to the West Church, for the accommodation of the public." In that vast building, fitted up with three hideous galleries, the wonderful invention of the eighteenth century, the crowd did not lessen. "Certainly there must have been a marvellous power of attraction that could turn a whole population out of their beds as early as five in the morning," adds Dr Chalmers. "The largest church in our metropolis was each time over-crowded." And the enthusiastic hearers took the younger members of their households with them, when it was practicable, through the crowd, by way of impressing that wonderful eloquence, so unlikely to appear again in their day, upon the minds of the new generation.

It was altogether an extraordinary new chapter in the preacher's life. Perhaps to disturb the equilibrium of the composed society of Edinburgh, and draw an immense congregation of his sober-minded countrymen from their morning slumbers and home comfort, into such a crowded assembly as the rising sun rarely shines upon, was the greatest triumph to which he had yet attained. It does not seem, however, that he looked at it at all in this vulgar light. "I have fairly launched my bark. God speed us!" he writes to his wife; and, without another word of comment upon his extraordinary audiences, proceeds to report his progress through Dumfriesshire, and to diverge into purely domestic matters, telling how one of the Kirkcaldy sisters, then in his native country, "is dear to all who know her;" but, "being of the Reformation school by education," perceives that the family with whom she resides is "but Evangelical;" and sending to another sister—the bride Elizabeth—the tender regards which her circumstances call forth. "My brotherly love and ministerial blessing upon her virgin head," he writes; his heart evidently touched with the tearful joy of that crisis of youthful life. Nor could any one guess, from this brief correspondence, that the writer was at the height of popular applause, followed, lauded, and commented upon by the whole disturbed town, in which he had appeared like

a sudden meteor; the agitating popularity which encircled him leaves no trace upon his hurried and simple communications.

And now the objections which had always risen against him began really to take a form grievous to his heart. London criticism had not dismayed the dauntless orator; but he was now among friends, and exposed to animadversions of a heavier kind. Again Dr Chalmers comes in, puzzled and full of doubt, yet speaking plainly the opinion for which his mind had evidently been preparing since his visit to London. "For the first time, heard Mr Irving," he notes in his brief journal; "I have no hesitation in saying it is quite woeful. There is power and richness, and gleams of exquisite beauty, but withal, a mysterious and extreme allegorization, which, I am sure, must be pernicious to the general cause. He sent me a letter he had written to the King, on the Test, &c., and begged that I would read every word of it before I spoke. I did so, and found it unsatisfactory and obscure, but not half so much so as his sermon." At the discussion upon the Abolition of Tests, in the General Assembly of that year, Chalmers again describes the apparition of Irving, making himself visible among the assembled spectators and doing all that a bystander could to make his own strenuous opposition apparent. "Irving is wild on the other side from me," said the calm and liberal divine, who supported with all his force of practical wisdom the abolition of a safeguard proved to be useless, and who had read, without being at all influenced by it, the eloquent letter to the King, in which the idealist opposite him set forth his splendid impracticable vision of a Christian nation bound under God to be swayed by only Christian men; "he sat opposite to me when I was speaking, as if his eye and looks, seen through the railing, were stationed there for my disquietude. He, by the way, had a regular collision with a Dr H., a violent sectarian, who denounced him as an enemy to the Gospel of Christ. The colloquy that ensued was highly characteristic; Mr Irving's part of it began with 'Who art thou, O man, that smiteth me with thy tongue?'"

Nothing could better illustrate the characters of the two men, whom it is always interesting and often amusing to see together, than this odd juxtaposition; the one, clear-sighted and executive within the legislative area; the other, impatient, eager, visionary, outside, spending his strength in vehement appeals and protests against the inevitable tide of things which was, visibly to his eyes, sweeping down the

lofty claims and standing of his country. Chalmers puts the impracticable optimist aside with a mixture of impatience and compassion—finds his impassioned protest "obscure and unsatisfactory," and proceeds, in spite of the brilliant gaze fixed upon him "through the railing," to clear the modern working ground for modern action and practical necessities. Irving, with a certain loving, noble scorn, all unaware of the different direction in which his friend's eyes are turning, and totally inaccessible to all considerations of practicability, watches the formation of the commonplace road, shaped according to compelling circumstances, and burns to rush in and establish the eternal ideal track, deviating for no compulsion, which neither he nor any other man can ever fix upon the surface of this earth. Yet, let nobody think that the ideal protest outside was of less use to humanity than the operative sense within. Chalmers helped on the course of modern affairs, and smoothed and widened the national path: Irving, with extravagance, with passion, with convictions which knew no middle course, stirred the hearts in men's bosoms, and kept alive the spirit of that sublime impracticable, which, never reaching, every true man strives to reach, and which preserves an essence of national and spiritual life far beyond the power of the most perfect organization or the highest political advantages to bestow.

Whether Chalmers's conclusion, that the lectures of this course were "quite woeful," was shared by the Edinburgh public, seems very doubtful; for, to the last, that public, not over-excitable, crowded its streets in the early dawn, thronging toward that point where the homely West Church, with its three galleries, stands under the noble shadow of the Castle Hill; and his wonderful popularity was higher at the conclusion than at the beginning. Nor is it easy to believe that the same year which produced the splendid oratory of the *Last Days*, could have fallen so far short in the special mission with which he felt himself charged. But Chalmers's disapproving eye did not perceive nor recognize the overpowering force of that conviction which had taken possession of his friend. The Second Advent was, to him, a doctrine open to discussion, possibly capable of proof; to Irving, a closely approaching stupendous event, of which woe was unto him if he did not warn his brethren. The one man was not able to judge the other with such an astonishing gulf of difference between.

Other encounters, telling upon his future career, happened to Irving at this remarkable era of his life. It was

one of the critical periods of religious thought. Here and there, throughout Scotland, one mind and another had broken the level of fixed theology, and strayed into a wider world of Christian hope and love. Departing from the common argumentative basis of doctrine, such minds as that of Mr Erskine of Linlathen and Mr Campbell of Row, afterwards notable enough in the agitated Church, had concentrated themselves upon one point of the bountiful revelation of divine truth, and declared, with all the effusive warmth of Christian love and yearning, the "freeness of the Gospel."

Dreaming nothing of heresy, but anxious to consult a brother in the ministry, of older experience and more vivid genius than himself, about this tremulous dawning glory which had brightened the entire world of truth to his own perceptions, John Campbell of Row, saintly in personal piety, and warm in Celtic fervour, came, with the natural diffidence of youth, to seek an interview with Irving. He found him alone in the drawing-room at Great King Street, with one of the children of the house playing on the carpet at his feet,—a tender domestic accompaniment to the high reverie and musings of the interpreter of prophecy. The stranger—less a stranger as being the dear friend of one of Irving's dearest friends—told his errand modestly: he had come to ask counsel and help in the midst of his hopes and difficulties. Irving turned towards him with the natural gracious humbleness of his character, and bade him speak out. "God may have sent me instruction by your hands," said the candid heart, always more ready to learn than to teach. It is not hard to imagine what must have been the effect of these words on the young man, shy of his errand. They sat down together to discuss that high theme, with the child playing at their feet. Nobody will doubt that their after-friendship lasted till death.

I am not able to estimate what effect Mr Campbell's views had upon the mind of Irving. As one part, and that a deeply important one, of the truth, great and wide enough to deserve any man's special devotion, and, indeed, the most clear demonstrative exhibition of the Gospel, it is evident that he entered into it heartily; and holding, as he himself held, that Christ's work was one which redeemed not only individual souls, but the nature of man, no one could be more ready than he to rejoice in the fullest unconditional proclamation that Christ died for all. His own sentiments, however, on other subjects, and the higher heroical strain of a soul which believed visible judgment and justice to be close at hand, and

felt, in the groaning depths of its nature, that the world he contemplated was neither conscious nor careful of its redemption, make it apparent that Irving's mind was not so specially bent upon this individual aspect of the truth as that of his visitor. But Mr Campbell commended himself entirely to Irving's heart. He was too visibly a man of God to leave any doubtfulness upon his immediate reception into the fervent brotherhood of that tender nature.

From Edinburgh, as soon as his lectures were finished, the preacher went to Glasgow, from whence, about a week after, he writes the following brief account of his labours to his wife:—

"Collins' shop, Glasgow, June 10th, 1828.

"I have a moment's time, and embrace it, to let you know that I am here, well, and about to proceed to Carnwath to-morrow morning. I have had much of the Lord's presence. I preached here on Matt. xiii. on Thursday. On Friday, on the Regeneration, when the apostles are to sit on thrones. On Saturday, on the Resurrection. On Sabbath, at Rosneath, in the tent, on Psalm ii. for lecture, and on the name of God, Psalms ix. and x., for sermon. At Row, on the 24th Matthew. To-morrow I preach on Matt. xxv., first parable; at Bathgate, second parable; and in Edinburgh, on the Last Times. I was much delighted with Campbell and Sandy Scott, whom I have invited to come with you to London. I trust the Lord will deliver him out of his present deep waters. I have much comfort in these extempore expositions, and, if I mistake not, it will constitute an era in my ministry; not that I will hastily adopt it, or always, but for the propagation of this truth by exposition. It is a great delight for me to find that I can preach every day with little trouble, with no injury. I trust the Lord preserves you in faith, and peace, and love. By the blessing of God, I will see you on Saturday morning. . . . . Farewell, my beloved wife!"

This brief record supplies little except the facts of the rapid but apostolic journey. I have no information as to the effect of his appearance at Glasgow; but when he arrived at the little westland paradise of Rosneath, and under the rich sycamores and blossomed laurel set up the tent, or wooden out-door pulpit, familiar to all eyes on great ecclesiastical occasions, and close by the little church, all too small for the overflowing audience, yet occupied by a portion of the hearers, thrilled the soft air and listening crowd with his herald's proclamation of the coming King, the whole district, hereafter to bear a notable part in his own history, was stirred by his approach. Doubtless the singular young woman who was first to receive that wonderful gift of "Tongues" which had so great an influence on Irving's future fate, was there from the head of the loch to have her mysterious imagination

quickened with words which should reverberate to the preacher's undoing. All the agitations and distractions of his latter days lay there in the germ by the sweet half-Highland waters, on the shore of which, as eager to penetrate the rural stillness as to charm the greater ear of cities, he delivered his startling message. Next day at Row, on the opposite shore, almost within hearing of his Sabbath-day's station, a similar scene was repeated. A witness describes, with a certain unconscious poetry, the aspect of the loch, bright with boats, conveying from all points the eager congregation, and Irving's generous spontaneous divergence from his special mission to take up and illuminate and enforce the equally special and earnest burden of the young brother who had unfolded to him his heart. There he met, not for the first time, but with an important result, another man of remarkable character, and no small influence upon his after life, Alexander Scott, now of Manchester, the son of Dr Scott, of Greenock, with whom, then a probationer of the Scotch Church, Irving entered into an agreement, engaging him as his assistant in his ministerial labours in London, where for some time afterwards they laboured together.

Passing through Glasgow, Irving then went to Carnwath, in the wilds of Lanarkshire, where his wife's cousin, the Rev. James Walker, was minister of the parish, and from thence to Bathgate, not far off, to his brother, Samuel Martin, another well-known and honourable parish priest. Another sermon in Edinburgh seems to have concluded this laborious week. On Saturday he crossed the Firth to Kirkcaldy, to join his family and share the household joys and conferences of the family home, then excited by all the agitations of an approaching bridal. It was the eve of the communion, besides—always a time of solemn yet pleasant stir in a Scotch manse. The tenderest, touching conjunction of family emotions was in that manse of Kirkcaldy on the expectant Saturday, and the solemn, cheerful dawn of the sacramental morning; one of the daughters a bride, another a delicate expecting mother;—sweet agitation and religious calm.

But darker shadows were to fall over the wedding day. On Sunday evening, after the sacramental feast was over, a prodigious concourse of people gathered in Kirkcaldy church. They had come from all quarters to hear a preacher so renowned for his eloquence, who had long been familiar to all the neighbourhood, whom once the popular mind of Kirkcaldy had scorned, but whom now the entire neighbourhood struggled for a chance of hearing. In the sweet summer

evening, when Irving, all unaware of any calamity, and having just left his ailing wife, was on his way to church, he met a messenger coming to warn him of the terrible accident which had just occurred. The overcrowded galleries had fallen, and, besides the immediate inevitable loss of life, which, fortunately, was not great, all the horrors of a vulgar panic had set in amongst the crowd. Irving immediately took up his post under a window in the staircase, and, conspicuous by his great size and strength, helped many of the terrified fugitives to make their way out, lifting them down in his arms. Such a scene of popular panic and selfish cowardice is always an appalling one. Dr Chalmers, whose wife and child were present, reckons, in his account of it, that "at least thirty-five people" were killed, two or three only by the actual fall of the gallery, and the rest "by the stifling and suffocation towards the doors of the church. The dead and dying were lifted out into the churchyard, the latter to receive such help as might be possible, and terror and lamentation filled the neighbourhood. In the midst of this heart-rending scene, one of the crowd, with a bitterness, perhaps, excused by some great loss, turned upon the preacher, and taunted him cruelly with being the cause of the terrible event. The reproach, bitterly unjust as it was, went to Irving's heart. He is said to have withdrawn from the melancholy scene to his own chamber, with tears of anguish and humiliation. And when this dreadful disturbance of the evening's calm had come to an end, and the troubled family, after having exhausted all possible efforts for the relief of the sufferers, were at last assembling to their evening prayers, his grieved soul broke forth into words. "God hath put me to shame this day before all the people," he said with a pang of distress all the more sharp and terrible from the love of love and honour that was natural to his heart. The short time he spent in Kirkcaldy afterwards was entirely occupied by visits to the injured or bereaved people, and, to such of them as needed pecuniary help, his purse as well as his heart was open. But the whole calamitous event seems to have been embittered by a wholly unreasonable and most cruel resentment against the preacher, which it is hard to account for. It is said that in some excited local coterie there was wild talk of *offering up the author of all this calamity as a deodand.* And even the fact that the marriage, thus sadly overcast, was not postponed, increased the popular indignation. Dr Chalmers himself, with inexplicable bitterness, exposed as he himself was to all the accidents common

to the gathering together of immense multitudes, describes this calamity as "the most striking and woeful effect of Irving's visit." It gave a tragic conclusion to the triumphant and exciting course of his brief but incessant labours.

Just at this eventful and exciting period, another infant son came into the world, in the Kirkcaldy manse, and, as soon as Irving could leave his wife, he returned to London, making a brief divergence into the North before setting out on his homeward journey. In this short expedition northwards he reappears out of the darkness in the following vivid glimpse, for which I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev. J. W. Taylor, of the Free Church, Creich. This gentleman writes:—

"My own remembrance of Edward Irving is thirty years old, yet is the impression as fresh as the day on which it was made. I remember the very bend of the pavement where first I saw him: the raven locks flowing down to his broad shoulders, his magnificent erect figure, the cloak thrown over his arm, and the giant air with which he marched, are ineffaceably present to my mind. . . . . He had come to Perth to preach. Mid-day sermons were not popular entertainments then, and the Kirkcaldy church catastrophe was fresh in people's thoughts; but the East church was filled. His text was taken from the 24th chapter of Matthew, regarding the coming of the Son of Man. I remember nothing of the sermon, save its general subject; but one thing I can never forget. While he was engaged in unfolding his subject, from out of a dark cloud, which obscured the church, there came forth a bright blaze of lightning and a crash of thunder. There was deep stillness in the audience. The preacher paused; and from the stillness and the gloom his powerful voice, clothed with increased solemnity, pronounced these words: 'For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.' You can imagine the effect."

The next that we see of him is in London, returned to his post, and plunging, without any interval, into his ordinary labours. He went, not to his own house—it being, indeed, a transitionary moment, in which he seems to have had no house, having ended his tenancy of one, and not entered upon another till his wife's return,—but to that of Miss Macdonald, a daughter of Sir Archibald Macdonald, once Lord Chief Justice, a woman of great accomplishments and wonderful self-devotion, who had been for some time the warmest friend of his family, and his own zealous assistant and amanuensis. From her habitation —then, it is to be supposed, a more refined locality than it appears now—he writes to his wife:—

"6, Euston Grove, Euston Square, London,
Friday, July 3rd, 1828.

"My Dearest Wife,—This is merely to announce to you my safe arrival. I have a long sheet begun, but there is not time to close it until to-morrow, for which I have a frank. I found Miss Macdonald well, about one o'clock; after washing, &c., we sat down to our old work* for about two hours; after which we have gone forth to visit the schools, which are thriving. . . . . As I passed through Cheapside, I called to inquire after our friends both there and elsewhere. Alex had received a letter that morning, to say that they were on their way, and would be here either to-morrow or on Monday. The Lord bring them in peace and safety! For myself, I am in good health, and slept well all the voyage. It is really a matter of some importance to come by the *James Watt*: and I would have you to bear it in mind. I fondly hope, before this time, you are so far recovered as to able to be up and to enjoy yourself, and that the dear boy is thriving well. God make his soul to prosper and be in health! And for dear Margaret, say that little Stewart inquired after her, and all rejoice in her health. But, no! guard against her vanity and egotism. It will become very great, unless it be kept down. I pray you to bear this in mind. Dinner is on the table, and Campbell is to spend the evening with us—going off to-morrow. My love to you all. God bless the homes of our fathers all!

"Your affectionate and dutiful husband,

"Edward Irving."

Mr Campbell of Row had either accompanied or preceded Irving to London, and had preached in his church, not only in the ordinary course, but an extraordinary Gaelic sermon, carrying back the minds of the changed congregation to those old days of the Caledonian Chapel, when Irving himself volunteered to learn Gaelic, if need were, rather than give up that post which he felt to be his fittest sphere. And it is evident that the profound piety and fervent love to God and man which he found in the heart of his new friend, had already made Irving a partisan in his favour, as was natural to the man. The correspondence proceeds not with the closeness or fulness of the journal-letters, which made the former separation between husband and wife memorable, but still conveying the best picture that can be given of his life and thoughts:—

"14, Westbourne Terrace, Bayswater, 19th July, 1828.

"My dearest Isabella,—I find it impossible, for some few days yet, of getting my plan carried into effect of finishing my long letter, so much lies to my hand; and, that you may not be disappointed of the regular communication which you so well deserve and I so much desire to make, I must send you these light pilot-boats before my great galleon. William and Elizabeth arrived last night about half-past eight o'clock. They are both looking uncommonly well; Elizabeth a great deal stronger

* Miss Macdonald writing to his dictation.

than at the time of her marriage, and both, as you may well conceive, glad to get home. We were holding a session, and so I did not arrive here till towards or after ten o'clock. The session were loud in their acknowledgments to Mr Campbell, and none more so than Mr Mackenzie, who, before, had been in some doubt of his doctrines. Now I think the judgment of so many pious and intelligent men, supported as it is generally, I may say universally, ought to have its weight among the gainsayers in Scotland. I wrote for Campbell two letters, as I said, and saw him off on Saturday night. On Sabbath I preached my sermon on 'Jesus,' and in the evening I opened the period of the provocation from the making of the covenant unto the turning back into the wilderness. Next Sabbath, God willing, I open the name 'Christ' and the Church in the wilderness. The services were both well attended, and the people seemed most glad to see me back again, as you may be sure was I to be back. I caused thanks to be returned for you, and I am glad, by your father's letter, to find that we have such good reason for the continuance of thanks.

"I have read Mr Eville's second tract, which contains a good deal of matter. . . . . I write these things because I know you love to meditate on them. Von Bülow called yesterday afternoon; he has been hunted out of Scandinavia, as they would a man-destroyer; but not until he had been instrumental in raising up two or three preachers in his stead, and he is now bound on his way to Poland, still in the service of the Continental Society. His wife is with him, and they have now three children. . . . . I have finished this day my dedication, which, as Miss Macdonald was writing it, containing a review and narration of God's dealings with the Church, we found we were writing on that day six years on which I set out from Glasgow to go to London to take up my charge. Next Sabbath is the first of my Sabbatical year. God grant it may be a year of free-will fruitfulness! I have several curious things to send to you, but I must wait for a frank. Mr Percival and his brother were in church on Sabbath morning. . . . . I forget whether there is anything else of news; but I forget not to assure you of my tender love and constant faithfulness. God grant me to prove myself your worthy husband! I bless my children, yours and mine. I pray God to bless all the house. Remember me with all affection, and pray for me always. "E. I."

The dedication mentioned in this letter was that of the splendid volume, entitled the *Last Days*, a work which one naturally places beside his *Orations*, and which, apart from prophetical researches, or the deeper investigations into doctrine of his Trinity sermons, is perhaps more likely to preserve his literary fame than any other of his productions. The dedication was to his session, and especially to William Hamilton, now so nearly connected with him by family ties, and his old elder, Mr Dinwiddie; and contained a history of his coming to London, and all the difficulties connected with it, from which I have already largely quoted. It is one of the chief of those

many brief snatches of autobiography in which he revealed himself from time to time with unconscious simplicity, and which, unlike prefaces and dedications in general, are of an interest in many instances superior, and always equal to, the book itself thus introduced. The same volume continues for some time to be the principal subject of his letters, as will be seen from the following extracts :—

"Mr Dinwiddie is in great trepidation at being put at the head of my book, and he tells me Mr Hamilton is of the same mind. I hope to persuade them better. I have a strong conviction that this boastful land is soon to be humbled. Oh, my dear Isabella, make no tarrying, but hide yourself and our children under the shadow of His wings, which is the Almighty. . . . . Pray for me often and diligently, and pray for us altogether in 'Our Father,' and pray much that we may have a sweet sense of the forgiveness of our sins. It is too good for me to be used as the Lord's instrument in these perilous times, though but little believed. Oh, God, grant me to be Thy faithful servant, in the spirit of a son, 'though a son learning obedience.' Coleridge and Wordsworth are gone to Germany in company ; is not that curious ? . . . . . I remember nothing further to mention, except what I would never forget—my love to all your house, and my blessing upon my children, and upon my tender and devoted wife."

"25th July.

"I have received the sermons, and, as usual, there is now nothing wanting, and what I am to do with them I have not yet determined. I wish* your father would make me a good bargain with some of the Edinburgh booksellers, and so implicate their purse that they would be forced, by self-interest, to push them, for I see no other way of getting such interested. I would give them an edition of the series, consisting of 1500 copies, two vols. octavo, for £500. I'll tell you what, my good chancellor, I will give you all you can get for them, in full possession, to do with it whatever seemeth to you good. Try Blackwood, or some of those worldlings ; for truly there is no longer any grace or honour, and hard justice must be the rule with such. I wish sadly you were back again. I miss you very sore, although Miss Macdonald does everything which one not a wife can do for my comfort, and I have reason to be thankful. She desires her kind love, and rejoices in your recovery. Tell Maggy she must come to her own papa, or I will come and carry her off across the seas. But now keep of a good heart, that I may see you the sooner."

"Blackheath, 25th July.

"I write this from Miss Stubbs' cottage, whither Miss Macdonald and I have come in order to see and enjoy its beauty, before it pass into the hands of another owner. . . . . Lord Mandeville came to us on Saturday night, and Elizabeth was with us. Mr Hamilton and Mr Mackenzie dropped in, and we spent a very sweet evening, being chiefly

* This is apparently a reference to the three volumes of Sermons already mentioned.

occupied with the Epistle to the Hebrews, upon which his Lordship and I have come to very similar conclusions. . . . . He had been at the Bible Society at Huntingdon, and had to stand in the pillory of Public Opinion. He had written, when invited to take the chair, that he had resolved with himself never to take the chair in any meeting which was not opened with prayer, and, hearing nothing further, concluded they had come to that resolution; but when he found himself in the committee-room, all but two opposed it violently. . . . . 'So,' he said, 'there remain only two ways to proceed, and I leave you your choice: either I will not take the chair and allow the county to put their own construction upon it, or I will take the chair and begin the meeting by an explanation of all that has occurred.' They preferred the last, to which he was not disinclined, lest it might seem that he was acting from ill temper. And so, having opened the matter by this act of lecturing, the meeting proceeded, every speaker levelling against his Lordship's view of the matter, and apologizing for and justifying the Society. . . . . During which exposition they were so given over to an ungovernable mind that they shut their ears with their hands, and even stamped with their feet, and did not refrain themselves from any other expression of disgust and disdain. . . But so it is, dearest, this religious world will outdo the French republicans in their rage against the true servants of the Lord, who shall be faithful enough to withstand them. . . . . Yesterday, though rather weakened in body, I was much strengthened in spirit for the Lord's work, to open, in the morning, the mystery of Christ the first-born from the dead, and therein preferred above all creatures to be the High Priest; and in the evening, to open up the mystery of Baptism as shadowed forth in the judgment and preservation of the deluge. . . . . There is a curious piece of information connected with the *Record* newspaper, which I resolved to communicate to you, in order to prepare you for that opposition which we are destined to from the religious world. It had come to a standstill, and was going to be given up, when Mr Drummond, and Haldane, and Lord Mandeville, and a few others, resolved to take it up and make it a truly Christian paper, adopting *jure divino* doctrine with respect to Church and State at home, and Protestant principles with respect to our foreign affairs, such as Cromwell taught Papal Europe to fear. The moment it was heard by the religious world (the Evangelical) that it was coming into the hands of such men, they rallied themselves, subscribed plentifully, and are resolved to carry it on. . . . . Such is the idea entertained of us, and such is the present standing of the *Record* religious newspaper. Prepare yourself, my love, for casting out of the synagogue. I am sure it will come to this, and that, according to our faithfulness in testifying to the death, will be our acceptancy and admission into the kingdom of the Lord. . . . . Beloved, I desire you to love me as I love you, and let us love one another as one self, not as one another, but one—the same."

"31st July.

"However short the time I can snatch, I know, though it were but a line that I wrote, it will yield you pleasure as a token of my affection;

and therefore I do not hesitate, in the midst of my many occupations, to send you these hasty and most insufficient letters. . . . In the mean time, I have been slowly working out Mr Drummond's book; for, as usual, I always feel myself pressed with a superfluity of matter, which I take as a gracious token of the Lord's goodness, and a call, at the same time, not to slacken in my endeavours to arouse the Church. It would have pleased you to see almost the whole body of the church full last night, listening to the exposition of the last part of the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation. I believe the Spirit cannot now be quenched. I feel the assurance of it, that the Lord's people are destined to make a stand in this place for His truth. The Dissenters are showing signs of fear in beginning to organize a lecture for next winter upon the subject of unfulfilled prophecy; and I hear they are prevailing against me in various parts, and that I am generally reported amongst them as a man wholly mad. I trust there is enough of method in my madness to expose all their treachery to Christ and His Church. About fifteen of the chief Protestant noblemen, with the Duke of Gordon at their head, have begun to organize amongst themselves a Protestant Association, to act not as a body, but with a mutual understanding in their several parts of the country. They begin now to perceive the sanctimonious mask of Satan concerning the Sacraments when it is too late. . . . Elizabeth was with us a good part of yesterday. We went out and looked at some houses, but as yet I see none to my mind; and, indeed, I am rather disposed, if I could bring it about, to take a lodging for you and the children somewhere in the neighbourhood of town, and to come in and out myself for some months until you are strong. I would like to hear your mind upon this subject. . . . . Miss Macdonald and I amuse ourselves amongst hands with reading a very curious German book of travels, full of beautiful plates – above all measure interesting. I think I shall be beyond you in German when you return, for I begin to like it very much: it is a rare book for Maggy, the plates are so magnificent. I heard from George the other day by Mr R——, and I have remitted him £30 in clearing of his expenses and enabling him to return. . . . . Would you believe it, that the Baptist minister refused to baptize Miss C——, because she declared that she expected the grace of the Holy Ghost in the ordinance? Indeed, there is no saying to what lengths they will go. They will now stop at nothing. . . . . God preserve my Margaret and Samuel unto the eternal kingdom! I often think woefully of the pair that are gone before; but I ought not. The Lord preserve me from all murmurings; but I am a very wicked man. The Lord alone can keep me in peace and tranquillity."

"Mornington Terrace, Hampstead Road,
4th August.

"On this day and at this hour, thirty-six years ago, I entered into this sinful world, and very evil have been the days of my pilgrimage, and sore grieved am I this morning to look out upon the past. Nothing could comfort me but the blessed revelation that it is so ordered of the Lord that our flesh should be full only of sin, and that by this ordinance His glory is advanced. This is not, 'Let us sin that grace may abound,' but it is, 'The grace of God aboundeth by my sin,' and,

therefore, I am born a sinner, and, being so, I am not to be discontented or murmur against God, but betake myself to the remedy which He hath provided, which remedy will only lay open the disease more, and force us out of ourselves into the Redeemer. The number of sins which I have committed are to me profitable to reflect upon only as they confirm the truth, which, by faith, I have received and hold, that the whole race of mankind is fallen, and, as such, cannot cease from sin. He that hath believed this is further advanced than the greatest spiritualist, who seeks and sighs that he may be torn up with racking emotions and painful workings of remorse. The work of the Spirit, in convincing of sin, is not by agonizing convictions, and bringing of us, as it were, to hell's mouth, but by a calm and settled avoiding of ourselves and the fallen world, always for the preference of Christ and the world to come. I therefore desire and pray, both for myself and for my own dear wife, that we may at all times prefer the glory of God in Christ revealed, to that temporary well-being of the creature, which is to be found in this fallen world. There is a well-being and perfection of the creature to be found here, otherwise there would be no glory to God in our preference of that eternal perfection which we have in Christ. In this way the Holy Spirit acteth in and upon us, not by making us insensible to the worldly well-being, but, while we are alive thereto, by leading us to prefer our better being in Christ. He hath not a pleasure in cruelty, or torturing us with what so many seek to have worked up in their experiences of a great and grievous sort, but He delighteth in our peace and joy, and giveth us to see the excellency and loveliness of our blessed Jesus, who hath been tried with every infirmity of the fallen creature, which in us becometh sin, but in Him stayed at infirmity and temptation. In perceiving that our Lord's flesh was altogether such as ours, we may well be comforted, dear Isabella, to abide in this flesh, all-sinful though it be, and await the good pleasure of the Lord. So may we, having a body conversant only with wickedness, and in itself competent only to the suggestion of sin, be so possessed with the Spirit of Christ (not the Holy Ghost in his unlimited Divinity, but the Spirit of Christ, that is, the Holy Ghost proceeding through the man-soul of Christ, and bringing with Him the humanity of Christ, His holy humanity, to bear up against, and overcome, our wicked humanity. Oh, blessed mystery!) that we may, notwithstanding of the flesh animated only to evil, be able to love and obey God from the heart. In all these thoughts, instructions, and prayers to and for my beloved wife, I have my sweet children in my mind no less than their mother, whom God beholdeth all represented by me. So may I bear them for ever on my heart!

"Our dear friend, Mr Paget of Leicester, was in church all yesterday, and kindly came down to converse, during part of the interval. I wish you knew him. He is truly a divine—more of a divine than all my acquaintances. . . . . He also, like Campbell and Erskine, sees Christ's death to be on account of the whole world, so as that He might be the Lord both of the election and the reprobation, and that it is the will of God to give eternal life by the Holy Ghost to whom it pleaseth Him. I first came to the conviction of that truth on that Saturday, when, at

Harrow, after breakfasting with a bishop and a vicar, I sat down to prepare a meal for my people. He thinks the Calvinistic scheme confines this matter by setting forth Christ as dying instead of, whereas there is no stead in the matter, but on account of, for the sake of, to bring about reconciliation. He also thinks that the righteousness of Christ which is imputed to us, is not the righteousness of the ten commandments, which He kept, and which is only a fleshly righteousness, but the righteousness into which He hath entered by the resurrection—that super-celestial glory whereof we now partake, being one with Him, and living a resurrection life. This I believe; and I take it to be a most important distinction indeed.

"Mr Drummond was at church last night, and brought me as far as Miss Macdonald's in his carriage. He was telling me a very extraordinary piece of intelligence, if it be true, namely, that the Tribes have been discovered, twenty millions in number, inhabiting the region north of Cashmere and towards Bokhara, in the great central plain of Asia. It would seem that there came men from them to Leipsic fair, who brought this intelligence. They were trading in Cashmere shawls. . . . . I will let you know more of this when I hear further concerning it. I am to dine with Mr Drummond this day week, to settle who are to be of the Albury Conference. He seems to think that we must select with more caution, as some of the people last year have not been very faithful. I hope it is only malicious report. Oh that we were filled with the love and the life of Christ! I have had but a restless night, and I write this fasting. It is just striking twelve upon the Somers-town church, which is almost right opposite my window, with a green grass park full of milch cows* between, which I overlook on this sweet autumn-like morning. My dear brother! oh, my brother! how oft, on such mornings, have we rejoiced in our childhood together; and, behold, thy visible part moulders in the dust far away, and mine abideth still. May we meet at the throne of the glory of God! This is not a prayer for the dead, but for the living. Miss Macdonald is to come at twelve to write. What excellence is wrapped up in that name—right-hearted, tender-hearted woman! Thou art, indeed, a comfort to me in the absence of my wife and children,—worth many sisters. Farewell, my dear Isabella; make no tarrying to return; our time may be short together, let it be sweet. I bless the children in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

"15th August.

"God hath enabled us, my dear wife, to be in perfect resignation to His will, and in much affliction to say, 'Thy will be done!' His actings in Providence are the declarations of His sovereignty, and our receiving them with thankfulness is our thankful acknowledgment of the same. Therefore, to me and mine be it according to the will of God. I did rejoice exceedingly when I found that He had been pleased to shine on us with His face, and I trust He will continue to do so more and more. It is very sweet to me to receive your letters, and to bear the share of your burdens. I have thought it might conduce to your health

* This description will startle the present inhabitants of that crowded and busy district.

and the children's to try the air of Monimail, and, if that did not recruit you, might it not be advisable to try the very mild air of Annan or Moffat? But act in this matter as you judge best. I think our desires are equal to be separated no longer than is absolutely necessary.

"Your prayers concerning my books have been answered in one respect already, that yesterday and to-day I have been directed, I think, in great wisdom, and delivered from great perplexity. You know how the book for the Church hath passed to three volumes. It is now my purpose to make it three complete volumes, and not to burden the Church with the risk, but to give them Mr Drummond's book,* which I think will come into immediate and wide circulation, the expense being already provided for. And now, having the other work on my hand, I propose adding to the first part another discourse upon the 'Method of the Incarnation,' which will complete the whole doctrine .... and this done, I offer the thousand copies to any bookseller in Edinburgh, being resolved to bring it out in the heart of my Mother Church, as containing the whole doctrine on which she is become so feeble, and containing, besides, much prophetic matter, and much national and ecclesiastical, which may prepare the way for the other work, upon which I find I must at least spend a diligent winter. This, therefore, I intend immediately to arrange for, by means of my friend, Mr Bridges, to whom I will write, and ask him to negotiate with the booksellers for me. This I think a very great deliverance, and humbly trust to see prosperous unto the Church of Christ and the glory of God. The additional discourse will bring the first volume up to the size of the other two, being 400 pages; and I will distinctly state the reason of it to be my becoming aware of the existence of the heresy in the Church. Be of good cheer: the Lord is not raising a controversy about these things for naught.

"I am now sleeping at Mr Hamilton's, but working here with my most faithful fellow-workman; and I trust attaining to deeper and deeper insight into the mystery of God, as also is my flock. To-night we begin Ezekiel at Mr Tudor's, and I trust the Lord will be with us. Mr Marsh intends to be of our party. And Miss Macdonald has consented to accompany me ..... Mr Drummond told us that the new London College was an idea of the Archbishop's, thrown out to the King, without thinking he would approve it. But he did at once, and the Archbishop pledged the Bishops, who were invited to Lambeth, knowing not wherefore, as a Bishop told Mr ——. When they were come together, the Archbishop told them he had pledged them to the King. They were loath, but could not draw back, and consented, in the hope it might come to nothing. The Lord leads men blindly; it is now come to £100,000, and will go on, I hope, to the defeat of the infidel, or to the showing out the Dissenters as the opposers of religion established, and the preferrers of infidelity un-established, and the establishers of it. Dr Sumner, now Bishop of Chester, was in Hatchard's, and said to a clergyman whom he met there, 'I have a note here to wait

* By "Mr Drummond's book," Irving evidently means the *Last Days*—Mr Drummond, it would appear, having specially suggested or approved it.

upon the Duke of Wellington. Tell me where he lives.' He went, was back in about ten minutes, and the clergyman was still there. 'You have soon got your business over.' 'Yes, and in so short a time I am promoted to the see of Chester. I was shown into a room,—in came the Duke: Are you Dr Sumner? I am commanded to offer you the bishopric of Chester. Do you accept it or not? Yes. Then put down your name here. Good morning.' And so he left him. This is from good authority, Mr Drummond says. I send it to amuse you and your father . . . . . The Lord bless you and my children, and all your house."

"18th August.

"I am glad to-day to have no accounts from you, concluding that dear Samuel is recovering, and that the mild weather will be blessed to the speedy restoration of your strength; yet, while I thus hope and pray, I desire to submit myself and mine to the great Sovereign Disposer, who ordereth all according to the pleasure of His own will. I feel that this is, indeed, to feel and to act upon my election of God, to surrender all things unto Him as a righteous and tender father, in which I know you labour along with me. By the blessing of God I continue equal to my duties. . . . . I am, indeed, very anxious that you should remove before those cold winds, which proved in God's hand fatal to our dear Edward. Whenever you do propose it, you should begin to have preparations made for your removal in such time as to leave you nothing to do for a day or two before, but to take leave of your family and step into the carriage or the boat. . . . . You may think this is shooting far ahead, but I am, indeed, desirous that you and my children should be with me as soon as is consistent with health and safety;—for I dread these east winds, and I long to be your nurse, if not in bodily, at least in spiritual matters.

"I have signed a contract with Seeley for the three volumes, to the first of which I intend to add a fifth sermon, demonstrative of Christ's true humanity. I take all the risk, pay the printers, and have a guinea for each copy, allowing him £5 per cent., which, if they sell, will leave me £1000, and the expenses of printing, &c., will be about half of it. It is provided that I may have separate agents for Glasgow and Edinburgh, with whom (Collins and Oliphant, I propose, with your judgment) I will make a similar contract for those which they may sell. Miss Macdonald has already pressed upon me £300, which she has no use for at the bankers, to pay the printing. It is a book for much good or evil, both to the Church and myself, I distinctly foresee. I intend to read it all over with the utmost diligence, and correct it with the greatest care. The other book is proceeding fast—we are now about the 350th page; it will be about 450. I have the sweetest testimonies, both from Ireland and from Mr Maclean, to my book on Baptism—or rather, I should say, yours—for to you, I believe, the thoughts were given, as to you they are dedicated. My little tale is now completed, about eighteen pages, and I have asked a revise, that I may send it to you under cover. We have had a *pro-re-nata* meeting of Presbytery, and I am much exhausted. I shall now close with my blessing; the blessing of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be upon the head of my dear wife, and my two children, for ever and ever."

The "little tale" here referred to was a quaint and graceful little narrative, entitled a *Tale of the Times of the Martyrs*, which his countryman, Allan Cunningham, then engaged in the arduous occupation of editing an Annual, had persuaded him to write. The Annual in question was the *Anniversary*, a publication which, I believe, lived and died in one appearance. Irving's story is a fine piece of writing, in the same style of minute and simple narrative as his journals, but is chiefly remarkable as his only attempt in the lighter form of literature, excepting, indeed, another brief narrative, equally minute, quaint, and melancholy, entitled *The Loss of the Abeona*, which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* nearly about the same time. Both are *true*, detailed, and simple to the last degree, and convey the reader into a primitive world of heightened, but profoundly reserved, Scotch imagination, very remarkable and impressive in its way. How he could have found time for such elaborate, minute cabinet pictures, amid all his great labours and studies, is more than one can understand.

His next letters are occupied with a project of visiting Harrogate, which Mr Drummond had proposed to him. Irving's health was shaken at the time; at least he was in such a condition of discomfort, as the strongest frames, shut out from external nature, and pursued by an incessant flood of thought, are naturally liable to. His doctor told him that, "as my complaints proceed rather from an excess of health and disarrangement of the functions through much thought, they (the Harrogate waters) would be of little good or evil to so robust a person;" yet, tempted by Mr Drummond's society, and by the fact that Harrogate was so far on his way to the North, whither he was anxious to go to bring home his wife, of whose prolonged absence he began to be very impatient, he seems to have persuaded himself to the contrary, and went accordingly. From Harrogate he writes as follows:—

"9th September, 1828.

"My dear Isabella,—We arrived here last night about twelve o'clock, and now that I have paid my respects to the well and breakfast, I sit down to write you with Mr Drummond's pen, ink, and paper, but with my own heart. . . I do trust this my coming here is ordered of the Lord for the restoration of my strength, that I may serve Him with more diligence and ability during the winter. Lately, there has been too great a sympathy between my head and my stomach, so much so as to cause slight headaches ever after eating. . . . . I doubt not that the root of the matter is study, which of late has been with me of a deeper, intenser, and clearer kind than at any former period of my life, as I think will appear in the things which are now in the hands of the printers. Besides the conclusion of my book on the *Last Times*, I have written 150 or 160

of Miss Macdonald's pages upon the *Method of the Incarnation*. . . . It will be a body and centre to the whole discourse, which now has a perfectly logical method: 1. The origin or fountain-head of the whole in the will of God. 2. The end of it unto His glory. 3. The method of it by the union with the fallen creature. 4. The act of it by the life and death of the God-man, and His descent into hell. 5. The fruits of it in grace and peace to mankind; and finally, conclusions concerning the Creator and the creature. If I mistake not, my dear Isabella, there is much more to God's glory in that volume than in all my other writings put together. . . . I have been strongly impressed, at the conclusion of the book, with the necessity of undertaking a work upon the Holy Spirit and the Church, but whether in the way of a completion of the introduction to *Ben-Ezra*, or in a separate treatise, I am not yet resolved; and then, if God spare me, I undertake a work upon the Trinity. What most blessed themes these are! They ravish my heart, and fill me with the most enlarged and exquisite delight. . . . Oh, my dear Isabella, how I long to be with you again, and to be one with you, unseparated by distance of place or interruption of vision, and to embrace my dear children! God grant me patience and constancy of affection, and a heart of more tenderness."

"17th September.

"I dare say this water would do me good, if I were to stay long enough, for it seems to enter into strong controversy with my complaint, and I think in the end would overcome it. But stay I cannot, for my communion hastens, and my duties call me to London. This is truly my chief reason for not delaying my journey to Scotland so long as you seem to have desired. To remain separate for a whole half-year from my wife and children is to me no small trial. When God requires it, I trust I shall be able to submit to it; but when there is no such call, I freely confess myself little disposed to it. . . . Besides, though we know differently, such separations lead to idle speculation, which it is good to prevent. That it is possible to prevent intrusion in London I have found during the last two months; and if London do not agree with you, I should be glad to take a place for you wherever you please, but I confess myself very loath to be separated from you and my children longer than is necessary, and shall be slow in consenting to it again.

"The other day the new Bishop of Chester, Dr Sumner, confirmed about two or three hundred persons. He had been instituted, or consecrated, only the day before at Bishopthorpe, the residence of the Archbishop of York, and made this his first duty. It was to me very impressive, and I hope very profitable. . . . His brother, the Bishop of Winchester, bore him company, and I was much impressed with the episcopal authority and sanctity of their appearance. Indeed, the more I look into the Church of England, the more do I recognize the marks of a true Apostolical Church, and desire to see somewhat of the same ecclesiastical dignity transferred to the office-bearers of our Church; which hath the same orders of bishops, priests or presbyters or elders, and deacons, whereof the last is clean gone, the second little better, and the first hath more of worldly propriety, or literary and intellectual character, than of episcopal authority and grave wisdom. Oh, that the

Lord would revive His work in our land! In what I have said I do not affect the ceremony, or state, or wealth of the English Church, but desire to see some more of the true primitive and Scottish character of our Church restored. I would wish every parish minister to fulfil the bishop's office, every elder the priest's, and every deacon the deacon's; and I am convinced that, till the same is attempted, through faith in the ordinances, we shall not prosper in the government and pastorship of our churches.

"To-day I have received a copy of Dr Hamilton's book against Millenarianism, and have been reading it all this morning: I think it breathes a virulent spirit, and seeks occasions of offence. I receive my share of his censure. I said to your father I would answer it, but as yet I have found nothing to answer, save his attempt to expose my inconsistencies with others, and theirs with me. Now, verily, I am not called upon to be consistent with any one but God's own Word. Still, if I had time, I would, for the sake of the Church of Scotland, which I love, and to which I owe my duty, undertake an answer to it; but at present my hands are filled. I wish Samuel would break a spear with him.

"I shall drink the waters till Friday morning, and then proceed on my way to York, from which I will take the first coach that I can get to Edinburgh. . . . . On Monday, I trust, the Lord willing, I will be permitted to embrace you all. . . Tell Maggy that she must make herself ready to set out on this day week for London. My dear Samuel is oft on my mind at the throne of Grace. God alone can convey my messages to him."

So concluded this separation, which at length made the solitary head of the house impatient, and produced the nearest approach to ill-temper which is to be found in any of Irving's letters. He conveyed his family home to Miss Macdonald's house in the end of September, where they seem to have remained for a considerable time, their kind hostess forming one of the household. The ceaseless occupation of this year is something wonderful to contemplate. The *Homilies on Baptism*, the three volumes of sermons, and the *Last Days*, were but a portion of the works so liberally undertaken, and so conscientiously carried out. In the intervals of those prodigious labours he had not only his own pastoral work to carry on from week to week, but, by way of holiday, indulged in a preaching tour with sermons every day; threw himself into the concerns of the time with a vehemence as unusual as it was all opposed to the popular tide of feeling, and became the centre of a description of study, known, when it throws its fascination upon men, to be the most absorbing which can occupy human intelligence. In this height and fulness of his life men of all conditions sought Irving, with their views of Scripture and prophecy. He heard all, noted all, and set to

work in his own teeming brain to find place and arrangement for each. The patience with which he listens to every man is as remarkable as the cloud of profound and incessant thought in which his mind seems enveloped, without rest or interval; but his perpetual human helpfulness is equally notable. When the Presbytery of London, doubtless moved by his own exertions, sends forth a pastoral letter to the Scotch community in London, it is Irving who takes the pen and pours forth, like a prophet, his burden of grief and yearning, his appeal and entreaty, and denouncing voice, calling upon those baptized members of the Church of Scotland who have forgotten their mother, to return to her care and love; and scarcely are these grave entreaties over, before, at a friend's impulsion, he is again devoting his leisure hours—those hours full of everything but rest—to that grave picture of the martyr's son, which must have startled the ordinary readers of Annuals into the strangest emotion and amazement;—while conjoined with all this is the entire detail of a pastor's duties—visits of all kinds, meetings with young men, death-bed conferences, consultations of session and presbytery; into all of which he enters with an interest such as most men can only reserve for the most important portions of their work. So full a stream of life, all rounded and swelling with great throbs of hope and solemn expectation, seldom appears among the feeble and interrupted currents of common existence. It is impossible to understand how there could be one unoccupied moment in it; yet there are moments in which he reads German with Miss Macdonald, or enters into the fascinating gossip of Henry Drummond, or consults with the young wife, Elizabeth, over her new plenishing, and what is needful to her house. Though they meet in solemn session in the evening, upon the high mysteries of Ezekiel, he makes cheerful errands forth with this sister to look at houses, and prepares by anticipation for the return of those still dearer to him, and has domestic tidings of all his friends to send to his lingering and delicate wife. Amid all, he feels that this time, so full and prosperous—this period in which he has come to the middle of life's allotted course, the top of the arch, as Dante calls it,—is a time of wonderful moment to himself no less than to his Church. He feels that his studies have been "of a deeper, intenser, and clearer kind than at any former period of my life." He "distinctly foresees" that one of the books he is about to publish is "a book for much good or evil, both to the Church and myself," though convinced that there is also more for God's glory in it than "in all my other writings put together:" he has, in short, come to the threshold of a new

world, which yet he cannot see, but which vaguely thrills him with prophetic tremors — a world to him radiant with ever-unfolding truth, persecutions, glories, martyrdoms, one like unto the Son of Man in the midst of the fiery burning with him, and the Lord visible in the flesh, vindicating his saints at the end. Such was not the future which awaited the heroic devoted soul; but such was the form in which his anticipations presented it now.

I may be pardoned for lingering on this splendid and overflowing year. Irving had already controversies enough on hand; vulgar antagonists, whom he scorned; assaults from without which could not harm him, having no point of vantage upon his heart; but nothing which touched his life or honour. He had enemies; but none whose enmity wounded him. Everything he had touched as yet had opened and sublimed under his hand; and no authoritative voice had yet interfered to attempt to drive back to doctrine and forms of words a man whose faith seized upon a Divine reality instead, and converted dogmas into things. He stood, open-eyed and eager, trembling on the verge of an opening world of truth, every particular of which was yet to gleam forth as vivid on his mind as those which he had already apprehended out of the dim domain of theology. And other men, who had also found light unthought of gleaming out of the familiar text which use had dulled to most, were gathering round him, bringing each his trembling certainty, his new hope. Whether they were right or wrong had as yet come under the question of no serious tribunal. Wrong or right, it was the love of God glowing radiant over the human creatures he had made that inspired them all; and to many an eye less vivid than Irving's this wonderful combination seemed the beginning of a new era, the manifestation of a higher power. For himself, he was at the height of his activity and the fulness of his powers: his anticipations were all grand, like his thoughts. He looked for suffering on an heroic scale, not the harassing repetitions of Presbyterial prosecution; and he looked to be splendidly vindicated at the last by the Lord himself, in glory and majesty. His heart swelled and his thoughts rose upon that high tide of hope and genius; shades of passing ailment might now and then glide across him; but it was "excess of strength" resisting the intellectual and spiritual commotions within, and not any prevision of bodily weakness. His friends stood round him close and cordial, an undiminished band; and every vein throbbing with life, and every capacity of heart and mind in the fullest sway of action, he marched along in the force and fulness of his man-

hood, prescient of splendid conflict and great sorrow; unaware and unbelieving of failure or defeat.

In the beginning of winter he paid a hurried visit to Leicester, to his friend Mr Vaughan, whose life was then nearly drawing to its close. The short time they appear to have had together was spent "conversing about the things pertaining to our high calling as ministers of the Gospel and Church of Christ." And the letter in which Irving records this is ended by an amusing conjugal advice, more in the strain of ordinary husbands than is common to his chivalrous and tender heart: —"I will hope to be with you, under Miss Macdonald's roof, on Thursday evening, which let us have quietly together," he writes. "And therefore be not over-wearied, for nothing afflicts me so much as to see you incapable of enjoying the society and love for which you do not always give me credit, but which I trust I always feel." And in a postscript, he adds a message to the little daughter, now, at three years old, capable of entering into the correspondence. "Tell Maggy," he says, "that at Dunstable a man would have sold me twelve larks for a shilling, to bake into a pie, four-and-twenty blackbirds baking in a pie; and that at Newport-Pagnell one of the horses laid down when he should have started to run, which is like Meg, not Maggy, when she will not do Ma's bidding, but stands still and cries. Not Maggy, but Meg; for Maggy is like the other three, who would have gone on cheerfully, except when Meg is restive." This is the first appearance of the little woman in the father's letters, which afterwards contain many communications for her. A week or two later he writes from Albury, where the second prophetical conference was now taking place, and after a brief announcement to his wife of his arrival, devotes his second letter from thence entirely to his three-year-old correspondent. I find no more serious account of this second meeting than the one Irving thus sends to his child:—

"My Maggy,—Papa is living in a great house with a great many men who preach. The house is Mr Drummond's and Lady Harriet Drummond's. They have two daughters and two little boys. . . . . This house where we live is all round with great trees, like great-grandpapa's, and the black crows build their nests, and always cry caw, caw, caw. There is a sweet little river that runs murmuring along, making a gentle noise among the trees. And there is a large, large garden. . . . . Now, my Maggy, tell your papa what he and the great many preaching gentlemen are doing at Albury Park, where Mr Drummond and Lady Harriet live? We are all reading the Bible, which is God's Word—the book we read at worship. God speaks to us in that book, and we tell one another

what He tells to us. Every morning, about half-past six o'clock, a man goes round and awakens us all. Then, soon after, comes a maid, like Elizabeth, and puts on a fire in all our rooms, and then we get up. . . . . Then we go down-stairs into a great room and sit round a great table, and speak concerning God and Christ. Here is the table, and all the gentlemen about it." (Here follows a rude drawing of the table, with the names of all the members of the conference scribbled in, in their places, Irving's own seat being distinguished by the title, "My Papa.") "But it is time for dinner. Farewell, my dear Maggy. Mamma will tell all this to you, and you must tell it all to Miss Macdonald and little brother.

"The Lord bless my Maggy!

"Your Papa,

"EDWARD IRVING."

The Albury conference once more produced its volume of records, travestied by a lifeless form and obsolete treatment, out of all human interest; but in Irving's domestic chronicle retains no memorial but this simple description. Immediately after its conclusion his father-in-law, Dr Martin, writes thus to one of his younger daughters:—

"We had a long letter from Isabella the other day. All with her seems to be well. Edward's visit to Albury had not, she thinks, done him much good, in body at least. The vehemence with which he goes after every object that impresses him is extraordinary. Some things stated at Albury had impressed him much with the ignorance of the poorer population of London, and with the sin of those who are more enlightened in not doing more for their instruction; and he has resolved to preach every night to the poor of London and its vicinity, while Mr Scott is to do, or at least to attempt to do, the like in Westminster. The Lord be with them! But there are limits to mortal strength,—Mr Scott's is not great, and Edward's, though more than ordinary, is not invincible. I suppose his conviction of the near approach of the Second Advent has been increased by his attendance on the late meeting; and viewing it as the hour of doom to all who are not reconciled to God, he feels it the more imperatively his duty to warn all to flee from the wrath to come. After giving the subject the most careful and impartial consideration I can," adds the sober-minded Scottish pastor, "I am unable to see things as he and his friends do; nay, I am more and more convinced that they are wrong. But supposing them to be right, and they doubtless imagine they are, his conduct, which many will be apt to represent as that of a madman, is that of a generous lover of his fellow-creatures, and a faithful ambassador of Christ."

Such was not the spirit, however, in which Irving's deviations from the ordinary views were to be generally received. He concluded this year with enough of these deviations to alarm any prudent friend. On the subject of the Millennium and on

that of Baptism (his doctrine on which differs from that commonly known as Baptismal Regeneration by the most inappreciable hair's-breadth), the authorities of the Church seem to have had nothing to say to him, and to have tacitly admitted these matters to be open to a diversity of opinion. How, doing this, the much more abstruse question concerning the Humanity of Christ should have been exempted from the same latitude and freedom, I am entirely at a loss to conceive, seeing it is, of all disputed questions, perhaps the most unfit to be argued before a popular tribunal. But the mutterings of the storm were already audible; and Irving visibly stood on a tremulous elevation, not only with dawning lights of doctrine, unseen by his brethren, around him, but even more deeply at variance in spirit with the time and all its ways. As if his own responsibilities, in the shape of doctrine, had not been enough, he had identified himself, and thrown the glory of his out-spoken, unhesitating championship over that which was shortly to be known as the Row Heresy. Everywhere he had "committed himself;" thought or calculation of prudence not being in the man. But at present, though his friends did not all agree with him, and though the scribblers of the religious press were already up in arms against him, no one seems to have feared any interruption of his triumphant and splendid career. Like other invincible generals, he had inspired his army with a confidence unconquerable in himself and his destiny. Some of the very closest in that half ecclesiastical, half domestic circle which gathered warmly round him in the new church at Regent Square, were afterwards to turn upon him or sadly drop from his side in horror of the heresy, to which now, in its first unconscious statement, they had given in their delighted adhesion. They did not know it was heresy for long months, almost years afterwards: they believed in him with a unanimity and enthusiasm seldom paralleled. Downfal or confusion, as it seemed, could not approach that fervent and unwearied herald of God.

CHAPTER XIV.

1829.

THE following year opened with unabated activity. The courage and hopefulness, equally unabated, with which Irving

entered upon it, will be seen from a letter addressed to Dr Chalmers, and apparently written in the very conclusion of December, 1828 (the date being torn off), in which it will be seen that the laborious man, not weaned, among all his other triumphs, from academical ambition, proposed, and was ready to prepare for an academical examination, in order to obtain the highest title in theology. This letter was written immediately after Dr Chalmers's entrance upon the duties of the Divinity Chair in Edinburgh.

"My dear and honoured Friend,—I desire to congratulate you upon the welcome which you have received in the University of Edinburgh, in which I pray that you may have much wisdom and long life to labour. I agree with that which I have gathered of your sentiments with respect to the excessive duties of the chair, beyond the reach of any single man to discharge them aright. Biblical criticism should be the chief object of the Hebrew chair, not the teaching of the letters and the grammar; and, certainly, of the three years spent in the Greek class, at least one should be occupied in the critical study of the New Testament. There is no university in Europe (always excepting the thing called the London University) which would be so ashamed of God and theology as yours, against which I ought not to speak, for she is my Alma Mater. Then the Church History, instead of dawdling over the first four centuries, should especially be conversant with the history of the Church of Scotland, and the duties incumbent upon a parish priest; in short, what belongs to the Churchman rather than the theologian, and the Hebrew what belongs to the scholar. Then it would be a Theological Faculty indeed. But what pretensions these two classes have at present to that title I am at a great loss to discover. This is spoken in your own ear, for it but ill graces what I am now to turn to.

"I have, you know, a great reverence for antiquity, and especially the antiquity of learning and knowledge: the venerable honours of the academy have ever been very dear to me. At the same time I love the discipline of a university, and set a great value upon a strict examination before any degree is conferred. On this account, when Sir John Sinclair volunteered more than five years ago to obtain for me the degree of Doctor in Divinity, I rejected his offer, because I held it against all academical discipline. While I would not have the thing thus attained, or thus conferred, there is no honour upon earth which I more desire, if the ancient discipline of sitting for it with my theses and defending them in the Latin tongue, submitting to examinations of the learned professors, were restored. Now, I wish you to inquire for me what is the ancient discipline of the university in respect to this degree; and whether it be the privilege of a Master of Arts to ask and demand examination for his degree; and how long he must have been an M.A. to entitle him to do so. I took my degree of A.M. in the year 1809, that is nineteen years ago. If the privilege were granted me of appearing in my place, and submitting myself to trial, I should immedi-

ately set about diligent preparations, and might be ready before the next winter, or about that time. I leave this in your hands, and shall wait your answer at your convenience.

"We have had another Albury meeting, and are more convinced than ever of the judgments which are about to be brought upon Christendom, and upon us most especially, if we should go into any league or confederacy with, or toleration of, the papal abomination. I intend, in a few days, to begin a letter to the Church of Scotland on the subject. They intend setting forth quarterly a Journal of Prophecy, which may stir up the Church to a consideration of her hopes. I think there is some possibility of my being in Edinburgh next May. Will any of the brethren permit me the use of their church to preach a series of sermons upon the Kingdom, founded upon passages in the New Testament? Sandy Scott is a most precious youth, the finest and the strongest faculty for pure theology I have yet met with. Yet a rough sea is before him, and, perhaps, before more than him. I trust the Lord will give you time and leisure to consider the great hope of the Church first given to Abraham: 'That she shall be heir of the world.' Certainly it is the very substance of theology. The second coming of the Lord is the '*point de vue*,' the vantage ground, as one of my friends is wont to word it, from which, and from which alone, the whole purpose of God can be contemplated and understood. You will sometimes see my old friend and early patron, Professor Leslie: please assure him of my grateful remembrances. I desire my cordial affection to Mrs Chalmers and the sisterhood. Farewell. The Lord prosper your labours abundantly, and thereto may your own soul be prospered.

"Your faithful and affectionate friend and brother,

"EDWARD IRVING."

This letter, sent by the hand of a relative, Dr Macaulay, who was "desirous of paying his respects to one whom he admires and loves very much," was followed, at a very short interval, by another, asking advice on a very delicate point of ecclesiastical order, which Irving states as follows:—

"London, 5th January, 1829,
13, Judd Place, East.

"MY DEAR SIR,—This case has occurred to us as a Session, on which it has been resolved to consult you, our ancient friend, and any other doctors or jurists of the Church with whom you may please, for the better and fuller knowledge of the matter, to consult. It is, whether the Church permit baptism by immersion or not. The standards seem not to declare a negative, but only to affirm that baptism by sprinkling is sufficient. In the Church of England, the rule of baptizing infants is by immersion, and the exception is by sprinkling. I sought counsel of our Presbytery in this matter, which once occurred in an adult, as it has now occurred in an infant. They seemed to be of the mind that there was no rule, but only practice, against it, and advised, upon the ground of expediency, to refrain. . . . . The father, who is a member of the Church, is a most pious and worthy man, full

of forbearance to others, but very firmly, and from much reading, convinced of the duty of baptizing by immersion only. He has waited some time, and the sooner we could ascertain the judgment of the Church the better. . . . . My own opinion is, that our standards leave it as a matter of forbearance, preserving the sprinkling,—the Church of England the same, preserving immersion. I am sorry to trouble you who have so much to do, but the mere writing of the judgment would satisfy us. And as you are now the head of the theological faculty, as well as our ancient friend, the Session thought of no other, at whose request I write. . . . . .

"Your affectionate friend,
"EDWARD IRVING."

So dutiful and eager to know the mind of the Church was the man whose long conflict against her authorities was now just commencing. If Dr Chalmers answered these letters, the answers have not been preserved; nor have I the least information what the head of the theological faculty said to that old-world application for an examination and trial by which the candidate for theological honours might *win* his degree. Irving was never to get within sight of that testimony of the Church's approval—far from that, was verging, had he but known it, upon her censures and penalties. But though this year upon which he had just entered was one of the most strenuous and incessant defence and assertion of doctrine, though its whole space was occupied with renewed and ever stronger settings forth of the truth which with growing fervour he held to embody the very secret of the Gospel, his position, to his own apprehension, was in no respect that of a heretic assailed. On the contrary, he conceived himself to stand as the champion of Orthodox truth against a motley crowd of heretics; and with this idea, calmly at first, and with more and more vehemence as he began to discover how great was the array against him, devoted himself to the assertion and proof of a doctrine which, when he stated it, he knew not that any man doubted. Throughout all his contentions he never abandoned this position. First surprised, then alarmed, not for himself, but for the Church, afterwards, and not till a long interval had elapsed, indignant, he continued steadily to hold this attitude. Even when the Church uttered her thunders, he stood dauntless, the Church's real champion, the defender of her orthodox belief, the faith once delivered to the saints. Such was his position, to his own thinking, in the struggle which was beginning. He did everything that man could do, privately, calmly, with unparalleled forbearance sometimes, sometimes with vehemence and rashness, to set forth fairly and fully

before the world the doctrine he held. He supported it with an array of authorities difficult to get over; with quotations from the fathers and standards of entire Christendom, with arguments and appeals to Scripture, almost always with a noble eloquence which came warm from his heart. In private letters, in sermons, in every method by which he could come into communication with the world, he repeated, and expounded, and defended this momentous matter of belief.

It is unnecessary that I should give any account of a question which he states so fully and so often in his own words, nor is it my business to pronounce upon the right or wrong of a theological question. But I think I am warranted in pointing out again the deeply disingenuous guise in which this matter was first set before the public. When the difference appears thus, according to his own statement of it, "Whether Christ's flesh had the grace of sinlessness and incorruption from its proper nature, or from the indwelling of the Holy Ghost,—I say the latter," it is a difference which certainly may exist, and may be discussed, but which cannot shock the most reverent mind. But when, on the other hand, it is stated as an heretical maintenance of the "sinfulness of Christ's human nature," the matter changes its aspect entirely, and involves something abhorrent to the most superficial of Christians. But in this way it was stated by every one of Irving's opponents; and attempts were made to lead both himself and his followers into speculations of what might have happened if the Holy Ghost had not, from its earliest moment of being, inspired that human nature, which were as discreditable to the questioners as aggravating to men who held the impossibility of sinfulness in our Saviour as warmly and entirely as did those who called them heretics. The real question was one of the utmost delicacy and difficulty, a question which the common world could only alter and travestie; re-presenting and re-confuting, and growing indignant over a dogma which itself had invented. Only by such a statement of it, which, if not distinctly false, was thoroughly disingenuous, could it at all have been brought into a platform question, for common discussion before the untrained and inexact public.

In the early spring, the first number of the *Morning Watch*, a quarterly journal of prophecy, to which he alludes in his letter to Dr Chalmers as meditated by the leading members of the Albury Conference, came into being. Its editor was Mr Tudor, a gentleman now holding a high office in the Catholic Apostolic Church. (I take, without con-

troversy, the name assumed by itself; gladly granting, as its members maintain, that to designate it a sect of *Irvingites* is equally unjust to its supposed founder and itself.) Irving took advantage by this publication to explain and open up the assailed doctrine, already popularly known as the doctrine of the Humanity, reasserting all his former statements with renewed force and earnestness. Besides this, the chief thing which appears to me remarkable in these early numbers of the *Morning Watch*, is the manner in which Irving pervades the whole publication. Amid eight or ten independent writers his name occurs, not so much an authority, as an all-influencing, unquestionable presence, naturally and simply suggesting itself to all as somehow the centre of the entire matter. They speak of him as the members of a household speak of its head; one could imagine that the name might almost be discarded, and "he" be used as its significant and unmistakeable symbol. To realize the fulness of this subtle, unspoken influence, it is necessary to glance at this publication, which has fallen out of the recollection of the greater part of the world. I do not remember to have met any similar instance of unconscious, unquestioned pre-eminence. No man there but is ready to stand up for every word he utters, for every idea he advances; ready, even before knowing what the accusation is, to challenge the world in his behalf. It is hero-worship of the most absolute, unconscious kind,—all the more absolute that it is unconscious, and that neither the object nor the givers of that loyal allegiance are aware to what extent it goes.

Irving's letters are now dated from Judd Place, another street in the same locality, where he had again entered upon the possession of his own house. Here he remained as long as he occupied the Church in Regent Square. There are various doubtful traditions in existence which describe how he used to be seen lying upon the sooty London grass of the little oasis in Burton Crescent, his great figure extended upon the equivocal green sward, and all the children in those tiny gardens playing about and around him,—which was most like to be the case, though I will not answer for the tale. This entire district, however, most undistinguished and prosaic as it is, gathers an interest in its homely names, from his visible appearance amid its noise and tumult. His remarkable figure was known in those dingy, scorched streets, in those dread parallelograms of Bloomsbury respectability. The greater number of his friends were collected within that closely populated region, to which the new Church in Regent

Square now gave a centre—as it still gives a centre to a little Scotch world, half unaware, half disapproving, of Irving, who tread the same streets and pray within the same walls, and are as separate and national as he.

This spring was once more occupied by thoughts and preparations for another visit to Edinburgh, on the same high errand as had formerly engaged him there. A letter of anxious instructions to his friend, Mr Macdonald, about the necessary arrangements for the course of lectures he meant to deliver, shows that he had already more difficulty than on a former occasion in finding a place to preach in.

"I yesterday received a most fraternal letter from Dr Dickson," he writes, "most politely and upon very reasonable grounds of damage and danger to the House, refusing me the use of the West Kirk, and I am perfectly satisfied. Indeed, it is as it should be, and as I anticipated it would be. The subject I have to open is too common and concerning to be confined to the walls of a house: it ought to be open as the day to all hearers from the streets and the by-ways, and from everywhere. . . . . You who know law, and are wise as concerneth this world as well as concerneth the world to come, see if there be anything to prevent me preaching in the asylum of the King's Park; and, if not, then signify by public advertisement in one or two of the papers, and by handbill and otherwise, to this effect:—'I hereby give notice that, God willing and prospering, I will preach a series of discourses, opening the book of the Revelation in regular order, beginning on Tuesday, the 19th of May, at six o'clock in the evening; and continuing each evening that week; but in the week following, and to the end of the series, at seven o'clock in the morning (not to interfere with the hours of the General Assembly); and earnestly entreat as many of my fellow-churchmen as love the exposition of the holy Word, and that Book which is specially blessed and forbidden to be sealed, to attend on these discourses designed for the edification of the Church. The place of meeting will be in the open air (here insert the place), where our fathers were not afraid nor ashamed to worship.

"'Edward Irving, A.M.

"'Minister of the National Scotch Church, London.'

"Let this be stuck up on the corner of every street; and for the rest we will trust to God. I believe the Lord will not fail me in this purpose, from which nothing on earth shall divert me. I will do it, though they should carry me bound hand and foot to prison. So awfully necessary do I now see it to be . . . . Let there be no tent: a chair on which I can sit and stand. Choose a place where the people may slope upwards, and so that we can wheel with the wind. Pray much for me. I never undertook so much or so important a thing. Ask the prayers of all who will not laugh it to scorn."

These arrangements were, however, unnecessary. Edin-

burgh did not see that sight which might have been as striking as any of the modern occurrences endowed with double picturesqueness by her noble scenery. The last representative of the ancient prophets, heroic antique figure, noways belonging to vulgar life, did not utter his message under the shadow of the hills, with his audience ranged on the grassy slopes above him. A place was provided for his accommodation, more convenient, if less noble, in Hope Park Chapel, situated in what is commonly called the south side of Edinburgh; and there he preached the second course of lectures, which he seems to have come to, in spite of all obstacles, with a still deeper sense of their importance than the first.

Before going to Scotland, however, he paid a short visit to Birmingham, with which place, or rather with the Scotch congregation there, he appears to have had a great deal of intercourse. He seems to have preached three sermons there during his short stay; but I refer to it only for the sake of the following letter to his little daughter:—

"My own Meggy,—Papa got down from the coach, and his large book, and his bag, and his cane with the gold head. And a little ragged boy, and his little sister, with ballads to sell, not matches, but ballads, trudged and trotted by papa's side. The boy said, 'I will carry your bag, sir.' Papa said, 'I have no pennies, little boy; so go away.' But he would follow papa, he and his little sister, poor children! So papa walked on with his bag under his cloak in one hand, and his book and his staff under his cloak in the other. It was dark, and the lamps were lighted, and it was raining, but still the little ragged boy and his little sister, with the ballads, followed papa—and the boy said, 'I will find you where Mr Macdonald lives.' So we asked, and walked through very many streets, and came to a house. And the door was open, and I said to the woman, 'Is Mr Macdonald in?' The woman said, 'No, sir, he is dining out.' Papa said, 'What shall I do? I am come to preach for him to-morrow.' She said, 'There is no sermon to-morrow: till Saturday.' Papa said, 'Are you sure?' She said, 'There is mass in the morning.' Now, my dear Meggy, the mass is a very wicked thing, and is not in our religion, but in a religion which they call Papacy. So papa knew by that word Mass that this was not the right Mr Macdonald's, but another one. So away papa trudged, his bag, his book, and his staff under his cloak, and the little ragged boy, and his sister with the ballads. Papa was angry at them because they would not go away, and had brought him to a wrong place. But papa had pity upon them, and asked them about their papa and mamma. Their papa was dead, and their mamma was in bed sick at home. So papa took pity upon them, and gave them a silver sixpence —and they went away so glad. I heard them singing as they ran away home to their poor mother. Now papa trudged back again, not knowing where to find the right Mr Macdonald. And papa took his bag,

and put his cane through it, and swung it over his shoulder upon his back, as he does when he carries Meggy downstairs. . . . . Now, after mamma has read this, tell it over to Miss Macdonald, and ask her to write papa with his stick and his bag over his back, and then tell the tale over to little brother, and kiss him, and say, 'This is a kiss from papa.'"

The picturesque individuality which is inevitable to the man wherever he goes, shows in the most tender light in this little letter. The big, tender-hearted stranger, in his mysterious cloak, with the little vagrants wandering after him in the wet Birmingham streets, paints himself more effectually than the kind domestic friend, whose custom it plainly was to make pictures for his little Maggy, could have done; and who will not believe that this silver sixpence must have brought luck to the poor little ballad-sellers so unwittingly immortalized?

Irving went to Edinburgh as usual by Annan, from which place he writes to his wife:—

"Annan, 14th May, 1829.

"I am arrived safe by the goodness and grace of God. . . . I have been to see the minister and provost, and, as usual, find everything ready arranged to my mind. This night I begin my preaching at seven o'clock, and to-morrow at the same hour. On Saturday I go up the water to New Bridge village, on General Dirom's property, to preach to the people on that hand. . . . . This will serve the Ecclefechan and Middlebie people. On Sabbath I preach twice in the open air, if there be not room in the church. Give God praise with me that I am counted worthy to preach His truth.

"I made a strong endeavour to gain my point of faith over the points of expediency at Manchester; I cannot say that I succeeded, and yet I am not without hopes that I have. They incline not to have the minister till they have the house respectably set forth: I protest against that, because I see no end to it. One thing, however, I have prevailed in, for which I doubt not I was sent to Manchester. I have received a full commission to provide a minister for Mr Grant's church at the works—and I have already chosen Mr Johnstone, your father's assistant. He will have £100 from the Grants themselves (munificent princes that they are!), with a house and garden, and their favour, which is protection from all want. . . . .

"Edinburgh, 19th May,
"60, Great King Street.

"At Annan I went on with my labours on Thursday and Friday. . . . But the assembly on Sunday passed all bounds. The tent was pitched in the churchyard,—and that not holding the people, we went forth to Mr Dickson's field, where it is believed nearly ten thousand people listened to the Word, from twelve o'clock to half-past five, with an interval of only an hour. It was a most refreshing day to all of us.

I passed on to Dumfries with Margaret and her baby that night, in order to get the mail next morning; and so I arrived safe, leaving all my friends well, praised be the Lord. Before I left Annan, letters came from Dr Duncan, Dumfries, and Mr Kirkwood, entreating me to preach there, and considering it was so ordered of God, as that they should be the first to ask for my vacant Sabbath, I consented at once, and shall therefore return there the last day I am in Scotland. For in that part there is a strength, Kirkwood and the Dows and Burnside are firm as to the human nature of Christ, which none here is, except Thomas Carlyle. James Haldane has written a pamphlet against me, but there is no strength in it. I called at Dr Thomson's last night, and fixed to have an hour with him for conversation. Now, for the matter which I have to do in Edinburgh. Hope Park Chapel is the place I am to preach in, if it will hold the people. My commission everybody pronounces a good commission. But it will be stiffly called in question, and I fear will have a hard battle of it. Let the Lord decide what is best and wisest. . . . Sometimes I am troubled by the reproach of men; but never forsaken or overcome. I desire an unwearied interest in your prayers, and the prayers of all the flock. My letters will be regular, but, I fear, short, for very much is laid on me."

The commission referred to above was a commission from the borough of Annan, by which Irving was empowered to represent it *as an elder* in the approaching General Assembly. It was the only way in which he could sit in that ecclesiastical parliament; and, though somewhat contradictory to his own lately expressed opinion, that the position of ministers and elders corresponded to the orders of bishop and priest, was in entire conformity with the ordinary Presbyterian idea, that ministers were but preaching elders, and were in reality members of the same ecclesiastical class. A warm discussion arose in the General Assembly when his commission was presented. It was one of those questions which, without being really matters of party difference, are invariably seized upon as party questions. One side of the house contended for his admission, the other against it. His defence was undertaken by Dr Andrew Thomson, one of the leaders of the Evangelical party, who very shortly after entered the lists against him in matters of doctrine; but manfully stood up now for the friend of Chalmers and Gordon, a man who, if not actually belonging to his own side, was leagued in the warmest amity with many of its members. Irving himself, before the matter was put to the vote, appeared, by permission of the Assembly, at the bar, to speak for himself. His speech is too long to quote: nor does he make any very vehement stand for his rights; very probably feeling that it was at best a side-way of approaching that

venerable Assembly, which he held in so much honour. The appearance he makes is, indeed, more for the purpose of supporting the claims of his constituents, and their right to elect the superior instead of inferior degree of ruling elder, if it so pleased them, than on his own account. But he takes the opportunity, the first and the last which he ever had, of recommending to the Assembly "to take a parental care of the hundreds of thousands of their children who are now dwelling beyond their bounds." In this appeal he waxes warm. He, too, is "beyond their bounds;" but is he not subject to their oversight and authority? "If I disobey," says the great orator, who could see into the mysteries of prophecy, but not into the slowly opening mists of the immediate years, "can you not call me to your bar? And, if I come not, have you not your court of contumacy wherewith to reach me? If I offend in any great matter—which I would fain hope is little likely—can you not pronounce against me the sentence of the lesser or the greater excommunication?" These words detach themselves from the context, to us who know what came after. He spoke then all unaware what significance time was preparing for the unthought-of expressions; evidently fearing nothing of such a fate. "I was enabled to deliver myself with great calmness and respect, in a way which seemed very much to impress the house," he tells his wife—"stating how I sought not to intrude, but had advertised my constituents to consult authorities upon the subject." And when the matter was at length decided against him, personal disappointment scarcely appears at all in the record he gives:—

"Edinburgh, 26th May.

"It gave me no pain at all to be cast out of the Assembly, except in as far as it wronged the burgh of Annan, and all the burghs in their rights, which we proved beyond a question are to send a minister or elder. . . . . The attention and favour which I received was very marked, especially from the Commissioner and the Moderator; and unbounded was the wonder of men to find that I had not a rough tiger's skin, with tusks and horns and other savage instruments. . . . . Upon the whole, I am very well satisfied with this event in my life. . . . . My lectures are decidedly producing an impression upon the people. The work of the Lord is prospering in my hand. The glory be unto His great name. . . . It is the custom for the Moderator to choose two ministers and an elder to walk down from the Assembly-house to the Levee-room in Hunter Square, and inform the Commissioner* when the Assembly is waiting for him. He honoured me

* It may be well to explain, for the information of readers unacquainted with Scotland, that the Commissioner is the representative of Her Majesty in

on Saturday with this duty, and the Commissioner asked me to dine with him, when I enjoyed myself vastly with the Solicitor-General and Sir Walter Scott, who were sitting over against me. The Moderator has sent me an invitation to attend the Assembly, and sit in the body of the house. . . . . It is hard work standing forth, with an extempore sermon of two hours, every morning at seven o'clock."

"29th May.

"I remain here till Friday night, when I go to Dumfries in the mail, and from there I come to Glasgow on Wednesday to preach, then to Paisley, and finally to Row. Above all things, I rejoice that I shall completely open the Apocalypse. I am wonderfully strengthened. The people come out willingly, and are very patient. They are generally assembled from seven to half-past nine. It tries my strength, but I have strength for it. . . . . There is a great work to be done here, and I think God has chosen me for the unworthy instrument of doing it. The number of ministers who attend is very remarkable. I could say much, but am weary, and am going to the Assembly. I desire my love to Mr Scott and Miss Macdonald, my brotherly love to Mr and Mrs Hamilton, my blessing upon the head of my children, and my whole heart to you, my faithful wife."

"4th June.

"To-morrow I finish my lectures, which I can with assurance say have produced a strong and lasting impression. The one thing which I have laboured at is to resist liberalism by opening the Word of God."

So concluded this second course of Edinburgh lectures. Hope Park Chapel was crowded; and quiet country people, trudging out to the suburban villages in the evening, or into the busy town in the early summer sunshine, remember vaguely still, without remembering what it meant, the throng about the door of the place; but it was remote, and out of the way, and very different from the West Kirk, in the heart of Edinburgh life, which he had occupied the previous year. The same amount of excitement does not seem to have surrounded him on this second occasion, though he himself appears to have been even more satisfied than formerly with the effect his addresses produced.

And now another course of ceaseless preaching followed, principally in his native district, where thousands of people went after him wherever he appeared, and through which he passed boldly preaching his assailed doctrine before the multitudes who wondered after him, and the "brethren" who were shortly to sit in judgment upon him.

the Scottish Assembly; and that, by way of making up for a total want of anything to do in that Convocation itself, this high functionary holds a sort of shadow of a Viceregal court outside.

"We arrived at Dumfries," he writes, "by six in the morning, when, having breakfasted with the Fergussons, I took some rest, and prepared myself for meeting a company of clergymen at Miss Goldie's, and preaching in the evening for Dr Scott, to whom I had written for the old church, which he readily granted. This I took as a great gift from Providence, for it is like the metropolitan church of our county. I opened the Apocalypse as far as in one lecture could be done. Next day I preached in the Academy grounds, upon the banks of Nith, to above 10,000 people, in the morning from the eighth Psalm and the second of Hebrews. In the afternoon I preached at Holywood, to about six or seven thousand, upon the song of the Church in heaven, Rev. v. The surveyor at Annan had the curiosity to measure the ground and estimate the people. He made it as many as thirteen thousand; and there were more at Dumfries. My voice easily reached over them all.* At Holywood I was nearly four hours, and at Dumfries three hours in the pulpit; and yet I am no worse. Next day I went to Dunscore, which stretches away up from the right bank of the hill towards Galloway. I visited Lag the persecutor's grave, by the way, and found it desolate; though surrounded with walls and doors, it was waste, weedy, and foul. There is not a martyr's grave that is not clean and beautiful. At Dunscore, Thomas Carlyle came down to meet me. It is his parish church, and I rode up with him to Craigenputtock, where I was received with much kindness by him and his wife. . . . My dearest wife, what I owe you of love and gratitude! The Lord reward you, and enable me to cherish you as my own self. From Craigenputtock I rode down with Carlyle on Wednesday morning, and met the coach at the Auldgarth brig, and came on to Glasgow that night. Alexander Hamilton I saw at Langholm. He and his sister are both well. And at Mauchline I stopped to ask for Mr Woodrow's parents, who are also well. I slept at Mr Falconer's last night, and am now, after many calls, seated in James Stevenson's, beside the chapel where I am to preach. Collins spoke this morning to me as a heretic, and I rose and left him with offence. I have much, much to bear. Let patience have her perfect work. There were assembled at Dunscore, though it be a lonely place, full two or three thousand people. These are my comforts, that I have the privilege of addressing so many of my beloved brethren. To-night I preach in the chapel of ease, proceed to Paisley, and preach to them to-morrow; thence to Rosneath, where I preach on Saturday, at four, and at Row on Sabbath. I travel back to Edinburgh on Monday, and preach at Kirkcaldy on Tuesday night; after which, on Wednesday, I take shipping for home,—sweet home!—the dwelling-place of those whom I am most bound to and beholden to in this world. My worthy father and mother came to Dumfries and Holywood all well . . . The blessing of the Lord be with all the flock. God help me this night.—*Friday*—I was much supported in preaching at Glasgow, and did the cause some service, as I hope. The Calton

* It is recorded that when preaching at Monimail, in Fife, in the open air, his sermon was heard distinctly by a lady seated at her own window a quarter of a mile off; and his voice was audible, though not distinctly, at double that distance.

weavers came soliciting me to preach on Monday night for the destitute among them. This I agreed to, and shall travel in the mail at eleven o'clock, and reach Kirkcaldy on Tuesday forenoon."

It is difficult to realize the fact that these intense and incessant labours were all entirely voluntary, the anxiously premeditated offering of his summer holiday to his Master and the Church. A local paper of the time confirms and heightens Irving's brief account of the crowds which followed him in Dumfries. The journalist, with the license of his craft, describes (*Dumfries Courier*, June, 1829) those audiences as "innumerable multitudes," and adds that not less than 12,000 or 13,000 people attended both the Sunday services. In Glasgow, however, for what reason I cannot tell, or whether it is simply for want of evidence, he does not seem to have gained the ear or the heart of the community. Glasgow, absorbed in the prose of life, had perhaps less patience than other places for the most impracticable of theologians; or, still more likely, never could forget that he had once been assistant at St John's, and that nobody had discovered the manner of man he was. A lady who knew him well, and was, at the moment, with him, describes with graphic vivacity an incident in this Glasgow visit. He had preached to a disturbed and restless audience, crowded but not sympathetic; and when about to leave the church found a crowd waiting him outside, full of vulgar incipient insult. Some of the bystanders addressed him in vernacular taunts —"Ye're an awfu' man, Mr Irving: they say you preach a Roman Catholic baptism, and a Mohammadan heeven;" and the whole position looked alarming to his troubled female companion. Irving, however, faced the crowd calmly, took off his hat, bowed to them, and uttered a "fare ye well" as he went forward. The multitude opened, swinging back "like a door on its hinges," says the keen observer, who, had running to keep up with his gigantic stride, accompanied him through this threatening pathway. It was the only place in which popular friendliness failed him. One great cause of this, however, is said to have been the warm support which he gave to Mr Campbell of Row, whose "new doctrine" had been for some time alarming the orthodox society of the West,—so that in Irving's person the theological crowd of Glasgow saw a type of all the heresies which put the Church and countryside in commotion. But after all this lapse of years, after the strange, lofty political principles which he had come to hold so firmly and speak out so boldly, the Calton weavers, democrats and radicals to a man, still re-

membered and trusted to the old friend who shared their miseries without ever learning to distrust them, ten years before, in the dismal days of Bonnymuir. His *jus divinum* did not frighten those critics, it appears; by a diviner right, long ago, he had possessed himself of their hearts.

After this he seems to have again paid a flying visit to Bathgate, the residence of his brother-in-law; for to this year belongs a beautiful anecdote told of him in that place. A young man belonging to the Church there was very ill, "dying of consumption." Mr Martin had promised to take his distinguished relative to see this youth, and Irving's time was so limited that the visit had to be paid about six in the morning, before he started on his further journey. When the two clergymen entered the sick chamber, Irving went up to the bedside, and looking in the face of the patient, said softly, but earnestly, "George M——, God loves you; be assured of this—*God loves you.*" When the hurried visit was over, the young man's sister, coming in, found the patient in a tearful ecstasy not to be described. "What do you think? Mr Irving says God loves me," cried the dying lad, overwhelmed with the confused pathetic joy of that great discovery. The sudden message had brought sunshine and light into the chamber of death.

An incident of a similar kind occurred about the same time in the Manse of Kirkcaldy. When the family were going to prayers at night, a messenger arrived, begging that Irving would go to visit and pray with a dying man. He rose immediately to obey the call, and left the room; but coming back again, called one of the family to go with him. On their return inquiries were naturally made about the sufferer, who had either been, or appeared to have been, unconscious during the devotions offered by his bedside. "I hope there was blessing in it to the living, at least," said the mother of the house. "And to the dying also," answered Irving; "for it is written, 'If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.'" It was for this sublime reason, holding the promise as if it had been audibly spoken to himself, that the Christian priest turned back to call the other, whose brotherhood of faith he was assured of, to hold their faithful Master to His word.

When these laborious travels were concluded, Irving returned to London, so unexhausted, it would appear, that he was able immediately after to prepare another bulky volume for the press. This was a work on *Church and State*,

founded upon the vision of Daniel, and tracing the line of antique history, the course of the Kings and of the Church, through Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, and Alexander, up to fated Rome, in all its grand developments. He himself explains the book to have been an expression of his own indignant sentiments in respect to the late invasions of the British Constitution, which, according to his view, destroyed the standing of this country as a Christian nation: these being specially the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, and the repeal of Catholic disabilities. It would be vain to attempt to vindicate Irving from the charges of illiberality and intolerance which his decided and vehement opposition to these measures may naturally call upon him. To us, in the present day, it is so difficult to realize how such restraints ever could have existed, that to understand the character of any serious opposition raised to their appeal is almost impossible. But I am not careful to defend Irving from such imputations. So far as his character may have been set forth in this history, so far will his sentiments be justified as the natural product of a high-toned and lofty mind, always occupied with the soul of things. Such a man is not always right; may be, in practical necessities, mightily wrong; but is always in a lofty unity with his own conclusions and convictions. His Divine Right, at least, is, if nothing else, a splendid ideal, always pointing forward to the sublime realization of that Personal Reign, the Divinity of which no man could question—and giving a soul to the loyalty he required by converting it into the patience of the saints, all conscious of a Government yet to come, in which Right and Law should be the perfection of Justice and Truth; and ready, for that hope, to endure all things rather than rebel against the external Majesty, which was a type of the universal King. I repeat, I do not defend Irving for holding such impracticable, impossible views. The training of the present generation has been all accomplished in a world from which those ancient restrictions have passed away; but such as find it possible to consider the matter from his stand-point, elevated as it was upon the heights of loftiest ideal right, and can enter into his theory of Government, whether they accept it or not, will need no exculpation of the intrepid champion, who, holding this for truth, was not afraid to speak it out.

The book was dedicated, with an affecting union of family affection and the loyalty of a fervent churchman,—

"To the Reverend SAMUEL MARTIN, D.D.,
My venerable Grandfather-in-law:

The Reverend JOHN MARTIN,
My honoured Father-in-law:
The Reverend SAMUEL MARTIN,
My faithful Brother-in-law:
And to all my Fathers and Brethren,
The ordained Ministers of the Church of Scotland.

While Irving was in Scotland, Mr James Haldane, of pious memory, published a pamphlet entitled, *A Refutation of the Heretical Doctrine promulgated by the Rev. Edward Irving, respecting the Person and Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ*, which Irving referred to slightly in one of the above letters, as having "no strength in it." This, and the other still slighter, but more painful mention, that "Collins spoke to me as a heretic," were the only marks of the gathering storm in Scotland; unless the stifled demonstrations of the Glasgow mob might be regarded as such. The position which Irving assumed in the above dedication and in his speech in the Assembly was clearly that of a man certain of his own position, and resolute that the name of heretic was one that could with no justice be applied to him. This certainty he never relinquished. Slowly and unwillingly the fact dawned upon him at last, that he was *called* a heretic, and the stroke went to his heart; but that he never acknowledged himself to be so—always, on the contrary, was confident in the perfect orthodoxy of his belief—is apparent through all his works.

He returned to London, to his "beloved flock," with all the comfort of a man who knows himself undoubted and unrivalled in his own special field. There no mutterings of discontent assailed him. His congregation stood around him, shoulder to shoulder, in a unanimity of affection rarely bestowed upon one man. The prophetic brotherhood, to whose company he had gradually drawn closer in late years, especially under the stimulus of the Albury Conferences, seem, like the congregation, to have been charmed by the magical influence of a heart so tender and so true; and to have given themselves up to his half-conscious sway with a loyalty and simplicity perhaps as remarkable as any circumstance of his life. Out of that beloved native country which had been but a step-mother to Irving, but which he could never keep his heart or his fated footsteps from, it was natural that he should go back with a sense of relief to the people who knew him, and whom he had led entranced and enthusiastic, unconscious whither, into all those vivid openings of truth which startled unaccustomed eyes with a hundred side-gleams

of possible heresy. He returned to his pastoral labours always more zealous and earnest in his work, if that were possible. I insert here a curious document, undated, and evidently intended solely for distribution among the class to whom it is addressed, which I imagine must belong to this period of his life, and which will show how minute as well as how wide was his observation, and how prompt his action in all the varied enterprises of his calling. It is addressed *To the Scottish Journeymen Bakers, resident in London and its neighbourhood.* Social Science did not exist in those days, but Christian charity seems to have forestalled statistics, so far, at least, as the vast field of Irving's labour was concerned.

"My dear Countrymen,—I have been at pains to make myself acquainted with the peculiar circumstances of your calling, and do enter very feelingly into the hardships and danger of your condition, from being deprived in a great degree of the ordinances of our holy religion, which are God's appointed means of grace and salvation. While I know that many of you do your best endeavour to profit by the means of grace, I know, also, that many more have a desire to do so, if only it was in their power; and I am sure the most of you will regret with me that not a few of you are fallen into carelessness, and some into entire neglect of their invaluable privileges as baptized members of Christ's Church. Moved by the consideration of your peculiar case, and desiring, as a Minister of the Church of Scotland, to spend myself for the sake of her children in these parts, I have come to the resolution of setting apart two hours of the second Saturday evening in the month, from seven till nine o'clock, for the express purpose of meeting with as many of you as will be entreated to come together, and holding some profitable discourse with you concerning the things which belong to our everlasting peace. These meetings we will hold in the Session House of the National Scotch Church, Regent Square, of which I am the minister; and, God willing, we will begin them on the evening of the 14th March, at seven o'clock.

"Take this in good part, my dear countrymen, and believe that it proceeds from a real interest in your welfare, especially in the welfare of your souls. I do not forget that, like myself, you are separated from father and mother and tender relations; that you are living in a city full of snares and temptations; that you are members of Christ's Church, for whom He died; and that I am appointed one of those who should watch for your souls. Do, therefore, I entreat you, receive this invitation with a welcome, and come with a willing mind to meet one who, though unknown to you in the flesh, can with the heart subscribe himself

"Your faithful and true friend,
"Edward Irving.

"P.S. Though this be written specially with a view to the young Scotchmen of the baker trade, and accommodated to meet their circum-

stances, other bakers of other nations will be welcome, even as they; for are we not all the disciples of one Lord and Master?—and other young Scotchmen of other trades, who may find this suitable to their circumstances, will be likewise welcome."

Whether anything came of this brotherly invitation I am unable to say, but it is an indication of the extent of those toils which only the inevitable hour and day, time and space, and nothing else, seem to have limited.

Early in this year (a quaint episode which I had almost forgotten), Irving's hands had been suddenly burdened by the whimsical liberality of the missionary Wolff, who, without preface or justification, and after an acquaintance not very long, if sufficiently warm during the time it had lasted, sent home to his friends two Greek youths, to be educated and trained to the future service of their countrymen. They were, of course, totally penniless, and this extraordinary consignment involved the maintenance, probably for years, of the two strangers. Irving announced their coming to his friend, Mr Story, of Rosneath, in whose parish he wished to place his unexpected visitors, with a certain chivalrous magniloquence of speech, as if to forestall all comments on the singular nature of the charge thus put upon him. "Joseph Wolff, my much esteemed friend," he writes, "and Lady Georgiana Wolff, also my much esteemed friend, have given me another proof of their esteem, by sending me two Greeks. . . . These two Greeks has Joseph Wolff sent—wholly entrusted to me—so that I am to them as father, and guardian, and provider, and everything, which also I am right happy to be. . . . . By the blessing of God, poor though I am, yet rich in faith, by His grace I will take upon myself the responsibility of their charges till they return to their native Cyprus again." The young men went to Rosneath to the parish school there, where they remained for years. In an after letter, Irving unbended from the high ground he had taken at first, and confessed, though only by the way, that this charge had been "rashly devolved upon him;" notwithstanding, he accepted it, and arranged carefully, as well for the economical limitation of their expenses as for the pastoral care and authority which he exhorted his friend to wield over them. I do not suppose, as indeed it would be unnatural to imagine, that the cost of Mr Wolff's liberality came entirely, or even chiefly, out of Irving's slender means. Such a thing could only have been possible had the matter been secret: but he assumed the responsibility, and undertook all those expenses without any apparent hesitation; never

dreaming, it would appear, of declining the charge so rashly devolved upon him, or of turning it off on other hands.

During this year he began to issue, in weekly numbers, his *Lectures on the Revelations*, afterwards to be collected in the more dignified form of four octavo volumes. These little rudely-printed *brochures* were each prefaced by a sonnet, the sentiment of which is more perfect than the poetry—that being, indeed, as in every case where Irving used this vehicle of expression, much less poetical and melodious than his prose. Notwithstanding, I do not doubt they gave a more grateful utterance to his own heart, at its highest strain of emotion; a use of verse which is not to be despised. The *Morning Watch* also contained various papers from his hand, —one series, treating of the *Old Testament Prophecies quoted in the New*, in which he takes occasion again and yet again to enter into that doctrine of our Lord's entire union with us in the flesh, which, the more he considered and meditated on it, opened up to him ever new and tenderer lights; and articles treating exclusively of the same subject, some from his own pen, some inspired by him,—authorities, arguments, eloquent expositions of this distinctive crown of his belief. In defence of this he stood forth before all the world, fervently convinced of its supreme importance: taking infinite comfort in his own splendid but troubled career—in his contentions with the world, in those still, domestic sorrows, unperceived by the world, which penetrated the depths of his heart with ever-returning accesses of exquisite sadness—from the thought that this very throbbing flesh, this very troubled soul, was the same nature to which the Lord, by conquering all things in these selfsame garments, had secured the victory. It was no dogma to Irving; the reality of the consolation and strength which he himself found in it is apparent in every word he writes on the subject; he fights for it as a man fights for something dearer than life.

Another Albury conference concluded the year. This was the third; and the yearly meeting seems now to have become a regular institution, returning with the return of winter. The bonds formed in this society were naturally drawn closer, and the interest of their researches intensified by this repetition, at least to a man who entered so entirely into them as Irving did. Nothing of the position he himself held in those conferences is to be learned from his own report; but the significant pre-eminence in which he appears in the pages of the *Morning Watch*, their organ and representative, implies that it must have been a high place. No

doubt the little interval of retirement, the repose of the religious house, enclosed by all the pensive sights and sounds of the waning year, the congenial society and congenial themes, the withdrawal from actual life and trouble in which these serious days passed, amid the falling leaves at Albury, must have been deeply grateful to his soul. Whether it was a safe or beneficial enjoyment is a different matter. There he attracted to himself by that "magnetic influence," which Dr Chalmers noted, but did not understand, a circle of men who were half to lead and half to follow him hereafter; attracted them into a certain loyal, all-believing admiration, which he himself repaid by implicit trust and confidence, as was his nature,—admiration too great and trust too profound. Nothing of this, however, appears in the following record of the third conference at Albury.

"Albury Park, 30th Nov., 1829.

"My dear Wife,—I have enjoyed great tranquillity of mind here, and much of God's good presence with me, for which I desire to be very thankful. Our meetings prosper very well. My time is so much occupied with preparations and examinations of what I hear, that, except when I am in bed, my Bible is continually before me, in the margin of which I engross whatever illustrates my text. This morning I have been alone, being minded to partake the Lord's Supper with the rest of the brethren. I find Mr Dow agrees with me in feeling his mind clear to this act of communicating with the Church of England.

"We are not without some diversities of opinion upon most subjects, especially as to the Millennial blessedness, which was handled yesterday. Lord Mandeville and Mr Dodsworth take a view of it, different from me, rating the condition of men in flesh higher than I do, and excluding death. I desire to think humbly, and reverently to inquire upon a subject so high. Mr Dow has great self-possession and freedom amongst so many strangers. Mr Borthwick is very penetrating and lively, but Scotch all over in his manner of dealing with that infidel way of intellectualizing divine truth, which came from Scotland. I, myself, have too much of it. Mr Tudor is very learned, modest, and devout. Lord Mandeville is truly sublime and soul-subduing in the views he presents. I observed a curious thing, that while he was reading a paper on Christ's office of judgment in the Millennium everybody's pen stood still, as if they felt it a desecration to do anything but listen. Mr Drummond says that if I and Dodsworth had been joined together we would have made a Pope Gregory the Great—he to furnish the popish quality, not me. I do not know what I should furnish;—but the church bell is now ringing.

"We have just returned from a most delightful service. . . . Mr Dodsworth preached from Psalm viii. 4, 5, 6. . . . Our subject tomorrow is the parables and words of our Lord as casting light upon His kingdom, opened by Dodsworth. Next day the Remnant of the Gentiles and their translation, opened by your husband; the next, the

Apocalypse, opened by Mr Whyte; and the last, the Signs of the Times, opened by our host. This will enable you to sympathize with us. . . . Farewell! The Lord preserve you all unto His kingdom.

"Your faithful husband,

"EDWARD IRVING."

With this Sabbatical scene, in which Irving was a simple worshipper, concludes, so far as I have any record, this year of strenuous labour and conflict. Another illness of his wife's still further saddened its termination. The sunshine of household prosperity did not light up for him that path which went forward into the darkness. But he went on boldly, notwithstanding, bating nothing of heart or hope.

CHAPTER XV.

1830.

FROM year to year, as Irving proceeded further on his course, the tide of thought and emotion had been hitherto rising with a noble and natural progress. He had now reached almost to the culmination of that wonderful and splendid development. Everything he had uttered or set forth with the authority of his name had been worthy the loftiest mood of human intellect, and had given dignity and force to the high position he assumed as a teacher and ambassador of God. All his discoveries and openings up of truth had operated only, so far as his own mind was concerned, to the heightening of every divine conception, and to the increase and intensification of the divine love in his heart. But another chapter of life had commenced for the great preacher. That a man whose thoughts were sublimated so far out of the usual way, and whose mental vision was so vivid as to elevate everything he clearly perceived entirely out of the region of compromise into that of absolute verity, should have gone on so long without coming in contact at some point with the restrictions of authority, is more wonderful than that the commonly orthodox understanding, long jealous of a fervour and force which it could not comprehend, should at length set up a barrier of sullen resistance against his advances. The conflict had fairly set in when the year 1830 commenced. No longer the politico-religious journal

ists of London, no longer stray adventurers into the world of controversy, but the authorized religious periodicals of his own country, and the divines of his mother-Church, were now rising against him; and while the storm gathered, another cloud arose upon the firmament—another cloud to most of the spectators who watched the progress of this wonderful tragedy; but to Irving himself another light, still more beautiful and glorious than those which had already flushed his horizon with the warmest illuminations of gratitude and love. Since that summer-day of 1828 when he preached at Row, and agreed with Mr Alexander Scott to come to his assistance in London, and work with him entirely unfettered by any pledge as to doctrine, that gentleman had been his close companion and fellow-workman;—and naturally had not occupied that place without an influence proportionate to his great powers. Mr Scott, like many others both in that day and this, entertained the belief that the supernatural powers once bestowed upon the Church were not merely the phenomena of one miraculous age, but an inheritance of which she ought to have possession as surely and richly now as in the days of the Apostles. A similar idea had already, in a kind of grand prophetic reverie, crossed the mind of Irving. So far back as 1828, he himself says he had become convinced that the spiritual gifts so largely bestowed upon the apostolic age of Christianity were not exceptional, or for one period alone, but belonged to the Church of all ages, and had only been kept in abeyance by the absence of faith. Yet with the lofty reasonableness and moderation of genius, even when treading in a sphere beyond reason, Irving concluded that these unclaimed and unexercised supernatural endowments, which had died out of use so long, would be restored only at the time of the Second Advent, in the miraculous reign, of which they would form a fitting adjunct. Mr Scott's stronger convictions upon this subject quickened the germ of faith which thus lingered in his friend's heart. "He was at that time my fellow-labourer in the National Scotch Church," writes Irving some time afterward, in his narrative of the *Facts connected with recent Manifestations of Spiritual Gifts*, published in *Fraser's Magazine* for January, 1832—

"And as we went out and in together he used often to signify to me his conviction that the spiritual gifts ought still to be exercised in the Church; that we are at liberty, and indeed bound, to pray for them, as being baptized into the assurance of the 'gift of the Holy Ghost,' as well as of 'repentance and remission of sins.' . . . . Though I could

make no answer to this, and it is altogether unanswerable, I continued still very little moved to seek myself or to stir up my people to seek these spiritual treasures. Yet I went forward to contend and to instruct whenever the subject came before me in my public ministrations of reading and preaching the Word, that the Holy Ghost ought to be manifested among us all, the same as ever He was in any one of the primitive Churches."

The influence of Mr Scott's opinions did not end here. His arguments operated still more effectually in another quarter, as Irving goes on to describe:—

"Being called down to Scotland upon some occasion," continues Irving, "and residing for a while at his father's house, which is in the heart of that district of Scotland upon which the light of Mr Campbell's ministry had arisen, he was led to open his mind to some of the godly people in these parts, and, among others, to a young woman who was at that time lying ill of a consumption, from which afterwards, when brought to the very door of death, she was raised up instantaneously by the mighty hand of God. Being a woman of a very fixed and constant spirit, he was not able, with all his power of statement and argument, which is unequalled by that of any man I have ever met with, to convince her of the distinction between regeneration and baptism with the Holy Ghost; and when he could not prevail he left her with a solemn charge to read over the Acts of the Apostles with that distinction in her mind, and to beware how she rashly rejected what he believed to be the truth of God. By this young woman it was that God, not many months after, did restore the gift of speaking with tongues and prophesying to the Church."

This incident connects the history together in its several parts with wonderful consistence and coherence. The preaching of Mr Campbell of Row, which had stirred the whole countryside with its warm and single-minded proclamation of an uncomplicated gospel; the proceedings against him,* then going on before the ecclesiastical courts, which quickened the tradesmen and labourers of Clydesdale into a convocation of learned doctors deep in metaphysics and theology;

* The report of these presbyterial proceedings, being the trial of this saintly and admirable man for heresy, by his Presbytery, in the very centre of the district which had been instructed and influenced by him, with its full testimony of witnesses for and against the orthodoxy of the reverend "defender,"—witnesses of all descriptions, ploughmen, farmers, small shopkeepers, Dunbartonshire lairds,—is perhaps one of the most singular records ever printed; each man of all these miscellaneous individuals being evidently, not only in his own estimation, but in that of the Presbytery, a competent informant on a nice point of doctrine; and their testimony of the different senses in which they had understood their minister's sermons, and their opinions thereupon, being gravely received as influencing the important question of a clergyman's character and position in the Church. Nowhere but in Scotland could such a body of evidence be brought together.

the repeated apparition of Irving,—then, perhaps, the most striking individual figure in his generation, and who spread excitement and interest around him wherever he went,—had combined to raise to a very high degree of fervour and vividness the religious feeling of that district. Several humble persons in the locality had become illustrious over its whole extent by the singular piety of their lives, piety of an ecstatic, absorbing kind, such as in the Catholic Church would have brought about canonization; and which, indeed, does everywhere confer a spiritual local rank equal to canonization. Such was Isabella Campbell of Fernicarry, a youthful saint who had died not long before in an odour of sanctity which no conventual virgin ever surpassed, and whose life had been published with immense local circulation by Mr Story, of Rosneath. It is unnecessary to describe more fully the singular condition of mind into which the entire district seems to have been rapt at this special period, since it has already been done with fuller knowledge and more perfect detail in the Memoir of the admirable minister of Rosneath,* written by his son. But religion had at this crisis taken a hold upon the entire mind of the population, which it very seldom possesses. It was not only the inspiration of their hearts, but the subject of their thoughts, discussions, and conversations. They seem not only to have been stimulated in personal piety, but *occupied* to an almost unprecedented degree with those spiritual concerns which are so generally kept altogether apart from the common tide of life. On such a state of mind Mr Scott's pregnant suggestion fell with the force that might have been expected from it. That which to the higher intelligence was a matter of theoretical belief, became in other hands an active principle, wildly productive, and big with results unpremeditated and unforeseen.

With this smouldering fire beginning to glow in unsuspected quiet, and with a longing expectation beginning to rise in the mind of Irving, the year began. Nothing as yet had come of that expectation. But no one can watch the progress of events, marking how Irving's heart grew sick over the opposition of his brethren, and how the deep conviction that this antagonism was against a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, and involved the Church in a practical denial of her Head, overpowered him with indignation and melancholy, without perceiving how open his troubled spirit

* Memoir of the Life of the Rev. Robert Story; by Robert Herbert Story, Minister of Rosneath.—Macmillan and Co.

was to anything which appeared like the ineffable joy of direct support and vindication from heaven.

In January his tract, entitled *The Orthodox and Catholic Doctrine of Our Lord's Human Nature*, made its appearance—the first distinct and separate publication on the subject which he had given to the world since the Incarnation sermons which first broached the question. It was a controversial reassertion, strongly defensive and belligerent, of the doctrine which he had before stated with calm exposition and lofty argument. I have heard many competent authorities say, that there are rash and unjustifiable expressions in this little book. It may very well be so; and, considering that his faith in this respect was the very heart and soul of his Christianity, it is not wonderful if he defended it with even an excessive vehemence. But no one can read this or any of his publications on the subject, without observing how he pauses now and then at every point of his argument, lays down his weapons, restrains his excited action, and with a simplicity and moderation that becomes pathetic as one observes how it is repeated, states over again the plain text of the question at issue. That self-control and affecting earnestness prove much more effectually than any heat of argument, how profoundly important he held it, and how deeply bent he was on conveying the true statement of his cherished belief to every ear that could be induced to hear. To a man so deeply human, there was no comfort in the passive immaculate image of a Saviour set aside from our temptations by a flesh which could not feel them, and only by some divine fiction of sympathy entering into the more heavily burdened way of His hapless creatures. But his whole nature expanded with love and consolation when he saw that Saviour sensible to those assaults which rend the human soul asunder, yet keeping perfect, in his strength and inspiration of Godhead, the flesh, which he held against all the forces of evil:—

"I believe," cries Irving with the deepest emotion, "that my Lord did come down and toil, and sweat, and travail, in exceeding great sorrow, in this mass of temptation, with which I and every sinful man am oppressed; did bring His Divine presence into death-possessed humanity, into the one substance of manhood created in Adam, and by the Fall brought into a state of resistance and alienation from God, of condemnation and proclivity to evil, of subjection to the devil; and bearing it all upon His shoulders in that very state into which God put it after Adam had sinned, did suffer its sorrows and pains, and swimming anguish, its darkness, wasteness, disconsolateness, and hiddenness from the countenance of God; and by His faith and patience did win for Himself the name of the Man of Sorrows and the author and finisher of our faith."

This was the very essence of his belief. And when from unexpected quarters, everywhere round him, he discovered that other men, that his fathers and brethren in his own Church, disowned this central truth which gave life and reality to the gospel, it went to his heart like a personal affliction. It was not that they differed with him on a controverted subject; the matter was different to his grieved and wondering perception. To him it appeared that they denied the Lord. The deepest heart of divine grace and pity, the real unspeakable redemption, seemed to Irving overlooked and despised when this wonderful identity of nature was disputed. He stood wondering and sorrowful, always in the midst of his argument turning back again to simple statement, as if, like his Lord, he would have asked, "Do ye *now* believe?"

And not only increasing controversy, but actual events, began to intensify the character of this conflict. The first parallels of actual warfare were opened by two younger men than himself, both, I presume, his disciples, on this question at least; one being the Rev. H. B. Maclean, of London Wall, and the other his chosen friend, Mr Scott. Mr Maclean received a presentation to a church in Scotland, and Mr Scott was chosen by the little Scotch congregation at Woolwich as their minister. The two events seem to have been almost simultaneous.

About the same time the *Christian Instructor*, a periodical published under high sanction, and in some degree the organ of the evangelical party in the Church, had entered the lists against himself. The criticism in which it indulged was, I understand, sharp and unfriendly; and to the author of the papers in which he was specially assailed, the Rev. Marcus Dods, Presbyterian minister at Belford, in Northumberland, and afterwards known as the author of a work on the *Incarnation*, partly, I believe, originating in this controversy, the following letter, a production, perhaps, almost unique in theological controversy, was addressed: another proof, if any were wanting, of Irving's inability to conceive of a nature less candid, manful, and brotherly than his own:—

"London, 13, Judd Place East, March 8, 1830.

"My dear Brother,—It is reported to me (and, indeed, without any signification of doubt, a friend, who wrote me the other day a letter from Edinburgh, approving what you have written, speaks of it without even an allusion to uncertainty) that you are the author of two critiques in the *Christian Instructor* upon some of my writings.

"I do not ask you whether you are or not; indeed, I would rather not know by whom they are written, for I am told they are very severe in their language and in their spirit, though I can only speak from report

of others, not being in the habit of reading that work. The object for which I write is to ask the favour of your setting down, in a brief form, what is the doctrine you hold on this subject, that I may leisurely consider it in my own mind; for I am assured you would not write on such high subjects without having well considered them. And I will set down for your perusal the sum of the doctrine which I hold; of which, let me say, till within these two years, I never knew that there were two opinions in any orthodox creed and true Church. I believe, then,—

"1st. That all things, with man as their lord, were created holy and sinless.

"2nd. That since the Fall they have all, with man as their head, become altogether sinful, without the power of redeeming themselves.

"3rd. That the Eternal Son of God, very God of very God, by incarnation unto death, and resurrection out of death, redeemed man the head, and man's inheritance.

"4th. That flesh in human nature was created all good, then it became all evil, then in Christ it became all holy, and by the Resurrection it became all glory.

"5th. That by generation our nature is all sinful, as Adam's was after the Fall, that by regeneration it is strengthened of Christ the regenerator, the second Adam, to overcome all sin, and that by resurrection it is changed into Christ's glory.

"6th. That sin in the regenerate ariseth, not from the weakness of the Spirit of Christ in them, but from their own moral wickedness, which they give place to, and so contract guilt, which needs a continual atonement or forgiveness, whereof we are assured in the good work of God's having united himself to our nature and sanctified it.

"7th. With respect to the experience of the Son of God in our nature, I am content to say that He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet never sinned: when I want to have this truth expanded I study the Psalms and the Prophets, which testify of Him.

"Now, dear sir, and fellow-labourer in the ministry of truth, I shall take it very kind if you will set down in a form somewhat similar to this the views which you hold upon these subjects, that I may consider them at my leisure.

"For God knows, who knoweth all things, that I have no desire upon this earth but to know His truth and to declare it. I would rather that you exhibited views in a summary form, than that you entered into criticism upon mine, although I should take it very kind, if you should notice anything wrong, that you should mention it. If you lived nearer me, I should think nothing of coming to converse with you at large upon these great points of our common faith. It is not the first nor the second time that I have travelled 100 miles to converse with men who were making the deep things of God their meditation.

"Though, certainly, the having heard that these articles, so severe on my writings, as I am informed, were written by you, was the occasion of this letter, I beg there may be no reference whatever to that subject, for what I do not know I do not need to think about, and, if I

did know that you had said, or written, or done the severest things to me, what is that but a call for me to forbear, and endeavour either to know your truth or to make you know mine? If you say, Why not read the articles? my reason is, that for many years I have walked by the rule of not reading anything personally addressed to me, unless the name of the person who writes it be subscribed. And this I do as the only way of honouring our Lord's rule, given in the 18th chapter of Matthew, for the redress of all personal offences, requiring that the persons should know one another.

"Let, therefore, everything connected with that subject be as far from your mind, when you answer, as it is from mine while I write this letter. Let us just regard each other as, in truth, we are, two brethren—two fellow-labourers in the vineyard of our Lord. I write this without the knowledge of any one, my wife lying asleep upon the sofa beside me, and my porritch cooling before me.

"If ever you come to London we shall talk this matter over at large: you shall be welcome to my house, as every brother is. Farewell! May God bless you and bless your labours, and lead us into all truth! This is the prayer of your faithful brother and fellow-labourer,

"Edward Irving,

"Minister of the National Scotch Church."

I am not informed what answer Mr Dods made to this remarkable letter, but its noble charity and candour certainly did not in any way change the character of the violent opposition offered to Irving and his doctrines.

To the correspondence of this period, while still the only public assaults upon himself were by means of the press, and while no authoritative censure had been yet proclaimed upon either of his followers, belongs also the following letter to Dr Chalmers—a letter of confidence and friendship so undoubting, that it is wonderful to believe that it met with little response. It is prefaced by a petition from the Session of Regent Square, that the distinguished Scotch preacher, who was to visit London during the summer, would preach in their Church. After preferring which request, Irving proceeds to unbosom himself with all the freedom of friendship:

"I need not say how unabated is my esteem of you, and how sincere my gratitude to you; and I believe that the wicked and shameless attacks upon me have no great effect upon your mind. You are a professor of theology; I am a theological minister, orthodox to the faith, and who can discern the unsoundness of a multitude as well as an individual. If those papers in the *Instructor*, of which I have heard scraps, and seen extracts, and know the substance, be the opinions of the ministers of the Scottish Church, then it is time that you, the professor of theology, and all orthodox men, should join together to resist the tide of error. I feel a dependence upon the largeness of your comprehension and the charity of your heart, and your cautiousness to take offence,

which is refreshing to my spirit forecasting the future. And really I am ashamed, in the sight of English scholars, to see a man, pretending to judge these great questions, talking about *Monothelos himself*, and ὁ ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος, signifying an ordinary man. . . . These things ashame me in the presence of English scholars. I know not what apology to make for the *Christian Instructor*, confounded as it generally is with my worthy and kind friend, Dr T——. If he is ever to become your colleague, get him at least better instructed in the nomenclature of the heresies; so that he shall not mistake the name of an opinion (onewiller), for the name of a man [Monothelos].

"I remember, when I dined with you, you opened to me your views concerning a first theological class, which should open the subject as a branch of liberal education. It is curious that, in looking over the printed acts of the Assembly from 1690 to 1720, I should find a recommendation or act to the same effect. I cannot lay my hand upon it now, being in the country; but, before you come to town, I will. When you come to town, I will be glad to be of all service to you that I can. My family are at present at Bayswater, hard by Kensington, where Wilkie lives, for the health of my wife and youngest child. I hope the Lord is restoring them. I have many things to bear; but the Lord and His truth sustain me. I gather strength and confidence daily. The Lord prospers my ministry. The addition to my church within the last year has, in communicants alone, been near to one hundred and eighty persons, and great, great fruit have I of my labours among the clergy of the Church of England. There is not a corner of this part of the island where the subject of Prophecy and the Second Advent have not in the Church firm and able supporters. And for the heresy of our Lord's humanity, when a friend of mine, passing from one diocese to another, had to give an account of his faith on that head, they would not believe that any one could doubt that our Lord took humanity under the conditions of the Fall. These were the Bishops of Gloucester and London; and yet the present most zealous prosecutor of Mr Maclean preached to the people of Irvine a whole sermon to prove that He took man's nature before the Fall; and others of his co-presbyters did the same. . . . . Oh, if there be any truth in the land, if the Church of Scotland be not given up of God, these men will be yet made to pay for it. 'Let nothing be done through vainglory.' You see how, being now a professor of theology, and I aspiring to become a doctor thereof, I write accordingly. Farewell, honoured and beloved sir! . . . . . I pray God to strengthen you for all His will, and to endow you for your most momentous station. . . . . .

"Your faithful and dutiful friend,

"Edward Irving."

Nothing can be more remarkable than the contrast between Irving's repeated appeals to his friend's standing as professor of theology, and the conduct of Dr Chalmers during the eventful and momentous period which had just commenced. During the following year several men, of the highest character and standing, were ejected from the Church of Scotland on theo-

logical grounds—grounds which Dr Chalmers, occupying the position of *Doctor, par excellence*, in the Scottish Church of the time, should have been the foremost to examine, and the most influential in pronouncing upon. Dr Chalmers quietly withdrew from the requirements of his position in this respect. That he pursued his special work nobly, in the face of all the agitation of the period, is a small excuse for a man who was so little of a recluse and so much of a statesman: it is, perhaps, the chapter in his life least honourable to the most eminent Scotch Churchman of his day. He was not bold enough, at that crisis, to put that "largeness of comprehension and charity of heart," in which Irving trusted, into competition with the vulgar fervour which swept the popular Assembly into anathema and deposition. "Amid this conflict of opinion, of which he was far from being an unmoved spectator, Dr Chalmers preserved unbroken silence," says his biographer. It seems exactly the course of procedure which Dr Chalmers ought *not* to have adopted; and this becomes all the more apparent in the light of Irving's frank appeals to the professor of theology—he whose business it was to discriminate most closely, and set forth most authoritatively, the difference between truth and error. The conflict which had begun in the Irvine presbytery against Mr Maclean, and that which was in full course in the Dunbarton presbytery against Mr Campbell, were, however, matters with which authority or learning had nothing to do; no council of doctors or fathers, no gravely-elect judicial body, examined into those delicate and difficult questions. The countryside sat upon them in its array of witnesses; the presbytery, an indiscriminate and miscellaneous crowd of ministers, by no means distinguished (as, indeed, no mass of men can be distinguished) for clearness of perception, theological learning, or judicial wisdom, decided the matter, or else referred it to the decision of a synod and assembly equally miscellaneous and indiscriminate. Meanwhile, the chief representative of what is called in Scotland the theological faculty, sat apart and preserved unbroken silence, leaving the ship at a crisis of its fate, the army at the most critical point of the battle, to the guidance of accident or the crowd. It is impossible not to feel that this abandonment of his position, at so important a moment, was such an act of cowardice as must leave a lasting stain upon the reputation of one of the greatest of modern Scotsmen.

In March, the first steps of ecclesiastical prosecution were taken against Mr Maclean. This gentleman, the same to whom Irving's noble *Charge* was addressed at his ordination, had been presented to the church and parish of Dreghorn, in Ayrshire,

in the beginning of the year, where his coming was hailed by the presentation of a petition from some of the heritors and members of the church to the presbytery, calling their attention to his heretical opinions. The appeal of these theological critics was met by the ecclesiastical court to which it was presented in the promptest manner. Their action was rapid but singular. They drew out a series of questions, which the young clergyman was called upon to answer; entering fully, and in an artful, suggestive way, likely to lead him to the fullest committal of himself, into the doctrine in dispute—or rather into their own statement of the doctrine in dispute—in which it was called "the peccability of our Lord's human nature;" and specially insisting upon explanations as to what our Lord might have done had he not been possessed and anointed by the Holy Ghost—a possibility wholly disowned and rejected by the assailed individual, who was thus placed at the bar under compulsion of criminating himself. Mr Maclean was inexperienced, and perhaps not over-wise, perhaps rash and self-devoted, as is seemly for a young man. He accepted the questions, and answered them in detail, with natural effusiveness and a want of prudence which is very obvious, though it is difficult to condemn it. A harassing process immediately commenced. No information upon the state of the parish which possessed a population so ripe for controversy, and thoroughly prepared to take the field at a moment's notice, is afforded us; but the theological parishioners held to their protest, and from presbytery to synod, and from synod to assembly, the case was dragged and combated. The interest of Irving in this matter was naturally of the deepest kind; yet, perhaps, scarcely so exciting as the more immediate contest, in which he himself was called upon to take part, in the ecclesiastical court of which he was a member. There Mr Scott, being called to go through the trials necessary for his ordination to the Scotch Church at Woolwich, stumbled upon the same point, and kept the presbytery to repeated meetings, which, by a chance perhaps unparalleled before in the annals of the Presbytery of London, were, in right of their connection with the distinguished name of Irving, reported anxiously in the newspapers, the *Times* itself pausing to remark and comment upon the proceedings of the Scotch ecclesiastical tribunal. These proceedings, indeed, seem, according to the newspapers, to have made a wonderful ferment in the perplexed world, which still watched the progress of a man in whom it could not choose but be interested for good or for evil. Mr Scott, being in delicate health, had requested that his trial discourses might be delivered to the presbytery

alone, without admitting the public, and his desire had been agreed to. This fact, which looks innocent enough, is taken up and commented upon by the various papers of the day with an interest and vehemence amazing to behold. It is denounced as a violation of the Toleration Act by various voices of the public press, little apt to interest themselves in the proceedings of Scotch presbyteries; and the *Record*, with pious spitefulness, does not hesitate to add, that "the privacy was adopted at the suggestion of Messrs Irving and Scott, as the means of concealing from the public the actual views and feelings of the presbytery: illustrating the truth of Scripture, 'He that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.'" The same paper declares that, "If the presbytery refuse Mr Scott ordination, they must necessarily call upon Mr Irving to recant, or resign his charge. It is gratifying to find so much firmness, intelligence, and faithfulness in the presbytery of London." This commendation, however, seems, from the point of view adopted by the *Record*, to have been somewhat premature, as the immediate conclusion of the presbytery was one which, without deciding the question so far as Mr Scott was concerned, gave equal satisfaction and consolation to Irving. He gives the following account of it in the preface to a little work, entitled, *Christ's Holiness in Flesh*, which was published in the following year:—

"About this time it pleased God to try the faithfulness of the ministers of the Scotch Church in London by this great question. A preacher, being called to one of the churches in connection with the presbytery, applied to them for ordination, and his trials proceeded with approbation till they came to this question of our Lord's human nature, and there they stuck fast. It was thought good to have a private conference of all the brethren, both ministers and elders, upon this question, at which we came unanimously to the conclusion of doctrine, which is embodied in the third part of this tract, in the drawing up of which I had no more hand than the others, and none at all in the submitting of it. It was the pure and unsolicited deliverance of the unanimous presbytery. By that deliverance I am willing that every sentence which I have written should be tried."

While these struggles were progressing at different points of the compass—Maclean, at Dreghorn, entangled in a mean and harassing series of examinations, in which his orthodoxy was tossed from hand to hand of two parties of peasant witnesses, whose recollection or non-recollection of his sermons was the sole ground on which to prove him guilty or not guilty; while Scott, more fortunate in his judges, had fallen sick, and

brought the complicated argument, as regarded himself, to a temporary suspension—the other influence to which I have referred was rising upon the stormy firmament. In the little farm-house of Fernicarry, at the head of the Gairloch, the saintly Isabella Campbell, whose name has been already mentioned, had lived and died a life of such unusual and expressive sanctity as to draw pilgrims to her couch and to her home from many quarters, and to confer upon her haunts a singular and touching local celebrity. The spot where this peasant girl—elevated by simple devotion and holiness into one of those tender virgin-saints whom Nature, even under the severest Protestant restrictions, can scarcely choose but worship—was accustomed to pray, is still one of the shrines of the district. It was at one time a retirement of delicate simplicity—a lonely nook on the hill-side, close by the devious and picturesque channel of a tiny mountain stream. The burn still leaps in tiny waterfalls down its ledges of rock, undisturbed by that gentle memory; but some enthusiast pilgrim has built a wall, a memorial of rude homage and affecting bad taste, round the mountain-ash and little knoll which the girl-saint had made into a sanctuary. When Isabella died, a portion of her fame—her pilgrim visitors—her position as one of the most remarkable persons in the countryside, a pious and tender oracle—descended to her sister Mary. This was the young woman "of a very fixed and constant spirit," as Irving describes, whom Mr Scott, a few months before, had vainly attempted to convince that the baptism with the Holy Ghost was distinct from the work of regeneration, but was as much to be looked and prayed for as the ordinary influences of the Spirit. Mary Campbell seems to have been possessed of gifts of mind and temperament scarcely inferior to genius, and, with all the personal fascination of beauty added to the singular position in which her sister's fame had left her—visited on terms of admiring friendship by people much superior to her in external rank, and doubtless influenced by the subtle arguments of one of the ablest men of the day,—it is impossible to imagine a situation more dangerous to a young, fervid, and impressionable imagination. For the circumstances under which that spark took light, I can only refer my readers again to the Memoir of Mr Story, of Rosneath, where they are fully and with great graphic power set forth. The actual event is described by Irving as follows:—

"The handmaiden of the Lord, of whom He made choice on that night (a Sunday evening in the end of March), to manifest forth in her His glory, had been long afflicted with a disease which the medical men

pronounced to be a decline, and that it would soon bring her to her grave, whither her sister had been hurried by the same malady some months before. Yet while all around her were anticipating her dissolution, she was in the strength of faith meditating missionary labours among the heathen; and this night she was to receive the preparation of the Spirit; the preparation of the body she received not till some days after. It was on the Lord's day; and one of her sisters, along with a female friend, who had come to the house for that end, had been spending the whole day in humiliation, and fasting, and prayer before God, with a special respect to the restoration of the gifts. They had come up in the evening to the sick-chamber of their sister, who was laid on a sofa, and along with one or two others of the household, they were engaged in prayer together. When in the midst of their devotion, the Holy Ghost came with mighty power upon the sick woman as she lay in her weakness, and constrained her to speak at great length, and with superhuman strength, in an unknown tongue, to the astonishment of all who heard, and to her own great edification and enjoyment in God,—'for he that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself.' She has told me that this first seizure of the Spirit was the strongest she ever had; and that it was in some degree necessary it should have been so, otherwise she would not have dared to give way to it."

It was thus that the agitating and extraordinary chapter in the history of the modern Church, which we have hereafter to deal with, began. It is not in my province, happily, to attempt any decision as to what was the real character of these marvellous phenomena. But the human circumstances surrounding their earliest appearance are remarkable enough to claim the fullest exposition. The first speaker with tongues was precisely the individual whom, under the supposition that they were no more supernatural than other elevated utterances of passion or fervour, one would naturally fix upon as the probable initiator of such a system. An amount of genius and singular adaptability which seems to have fitted her for taking a place in society far above that to which she had been accustomed; a faculty of representing her own proceedings so as, whether wrong or right, to exculpate herself, and interest even those who were opposed to her; a conviction, founded perhaps upon her sister's well-known character, and the prominent position she herself was consequently placed in, that something notable was expected from her; and the joint stimulus of admiration and scoffing—all mingled with a sincere desire to serve God and advance His glory, were powerful agencies in one young, enthusiastic, and inexperienced spirit. And when to all these kindling elements came that fire of suggestion, at first rejected, afterwards warmly received, and blazing forth at last in so wonderfully literal an answer, it is impossible not to feel how

many earthly predisposing causes there were which corresponded with, even if they did not actually produce, the result. In saying so much, I leave the truth or falsehood of the "Tongues" entirely out of the question. I do not judge Mary Campbell, much less the numerous others who, without the excitement of Mary Campbell's special surroundings, afterwards exhibited the same power. But I should not be fulfilling the task I have undertaken, if I did not point out the dubious cradle from which so wonderful a development proceeded; and the singular position of influence and universal observation occupied by this young woman—her consciousness that she stood full in the eye of the little world that surrounded her—her personal fascination and mental powers. Such an opportunity of acting upon what, in a limited horizon, seems the universal mind, scarcely occurs to a member of the humbler classes once in a generation; to a woman, perhaps not once in a thousand years. Altogether this youthful female figure, appearing out of the troubled expectant country as with a message from heaven; this inspired creature, fair and delicate and young, with all the hopes and purposes of youth removed into superlative spiritual regions,—nothing more earthly than a mission to the heathen occupying her solitary musings,—is one which nobody can turn from without wonder and interest, and which naturally awoke the highest excitement in the already agitated district to which she belonged.

Nor was this all. On the opposite shores of Clyde, in the little town of Port Glasgow, dwelt a family distinguished, like these two young Campbells, for a profound and saintly piety, which had marked them out from their neighbours, and attracted to them many friends, out of their own condition. The leading members of this household were two brothers, according to all report, men of the soberest steadfast life, quietly labouring at their business, and in no way likely to be the subjects of ecstatic emotion. But with results more startling and wonderful still, the newly-awakened power glided over the loch and river, to the devout and prayerful house of the Macdonalds. Touching first upon an invalid sister, it then burst upon the elder brother with an impulse more extraordinary than any mere utterance. James Macdonald had returned from the building-yard, where he pursued his daily business, to his midday dinner, after the calm usage of a labouring man. He found the invalid of the household in the agonies of this new inspiration. The awed and wondering family concluded with reverential gravity that she was dying, and thus account-

ed to themselves for the singular exhibition they saw. "At dinner-time James and George came home as usual," says the simple family narrative, "whom she then addressed at great length, concluding with a solemn prayer for James, that he might *at that time* be endowed with the power of the Holy Ghost. Almost instantly, James calmly said, 'I have got it.' He walked to the window, and stood silent for a minute or two. I looked at him, and almost trembled, there was such a change upon his whole countenance. He then, with a step and manner of the most indescribable majesty, walked up to ——'s bedside, and addressed her in these words of the 20th Psalm, 'Arise, and stand upright.' He repeated the words, took her by the hand, and she arose." After this wonderful event, with inconceivable human composure, the homely record continues, "we all quietly sat down, and took our dinner;" an anticlimax to the extraordinary agitation and excitement of the scene just described, which no fiction dared attempt, and which nothing but reality, always so daring in its individual opposition to recognized laws of nature, could venture to have added to the description. The young woman was not merely raised from her sick-bed for the moment, but *cured;* and the next step taken by the brother so suddenly and miraculously endowed, was to write to Mary Campbell, then apparently approaching death, conveying to her the same command which had been so effectual in the case of his sister. The sick ecstatic received this letter in the depths of languor and declining weakness, and without even the hand of the newly-inspired to help her, rose up and declared herself healed. I do not pretend to account for these extraordinary circumstances. Whatever natural explanations they may be capable of, I do not believe it possible to account for them by supposing anything like trickery or simulation beneath. They take their place among the many other unresolvable wonders which have from time to time perplexed the world; but whatever the cause, the result was real. Mary Campbell, who before this time had been confined to bed, from this moment, without any interval, returned to active life; became, as was natural, the centre of double curiosity and interest, spoke, expounded, gave forth the utterances of her power in crowded assemblies, and entered into the full career of a prophetess and gifted person. The Macdonalds, less demonstrative, and more homely, went on upon their modest way, attracting crowds of observers, without being thereby withdrawn from the composed and sober course of their exist-

ence; and thus a new miraculous dispensation was, to the belief of many, inaugurated, in all the power of Apostolic times, by these waters of the West.

When these extraordinary events became known, they reached the ear of Irving by many means. One of his deacons belonged to a family in the district, who sent full and frequent accounts. Others of his closest friends—Mr Story, in whose immediate parish the wonder had first arisen, and Mr Campbell, whose teaching had helped to inspire it—looked on with wistful scrutiny, eagerly hopeful, yet not fully convinced of the reality of what they saw. Mr Erskine of Linlathen went upon a mission of personal inquiry, which persuaded his tender Christian soul of the unspeakable comforts of a new revelation. Almost every notable Christian man of the time took the matter into devout and anxious consideration. Even Chalmers, always cautious, inquired eagerly, and would not condemn. On Irving the effect was warmer and more instantaneous. Assured of the personal piety which nobody could gainsay, and doubtless moved with a subtle, unconscious, propitiating influence, conveyed by the fact that his own distinctive teachings were echoed in what seemed divine amens and confirmations through those burdens of prophecy, he does not seem to have hesitated for an instant. A subtle agitation of hope, wonder, and curiosity pervaded the Church, which, under Irving's half-miraculous realizations of every truth he touched, must have been fully prepared for the entirely miraculous, whenever it should appear with reasonable warrant and witness. The future palpitated before the earnest leader and his anxious followers. If their controversies did not slacken, broken lights of a consolation, which, if realized, would be unspeakable and beyond the hopes of man, came to brighten that troubled, laborious way. It was a moment of indescribable hope and solemn excitement, when to the strained eyes and ears and throbbing hearts, which stood watching on the threshold of revelation, nobody could predict or conceive what wonderful burst of glory any moment might bring.

The following letters appear, however, to have been written in the suspense of this crisis, before any absolute manifestation of the new gifts had been made in England. In this interval Dr Chalmers once more visited London; and seems, according to the details in Irving's letters, to have preached not only on a Sunday, but also at some week-day services in the National Scotch Church. At this moment Irving's much-tried household was again in deep anxiety and distress. The little Samuel had been for some time ill; so

ill that the troubled house was unable to offer the ordinary hospitalities to the visitor, but had to fulfil those duties, so imperative to the habits of Scotsmen, vicariously through Mr Hamilton; and the anxious father was even afraid to be out late in the evening,—his dying baby holding stronger to his heart than even his much-prized friend, to whom once more he thus expresses his affection:—

"Believe me when I say that, in regard to the preaching also, it is the entire love and high admiration which I have of you that makes me feel it so desirable. I am sore beleaguered, and have almost been beaten to the ground; but my God hath sustained me, through your means. The time will come, and perhaps is not far distant, when I shall begin to be understood and valued according to the sincerity of my heart: but if not, let me die the death of the righteous One, who was crucified as a blasphemer; and let my latter end be like His."

This was the last encounter, so far as mutual help and sympathy were concerned, of these two singularly unlike men. They went together once more, before they parted, to visit Coleridge, as they had gone together to visit him when life and hope were at their brightest for Irving, and everything seemed possible. Strangely different must this second visit have been. Seven years before, Chalmers, half-wondering, half-amused, had watched the young preacher in the early flush of his fame, sitting at the feet of the sage; both of them equally curious, and half-decipherable to the eyes bright with characteristic genius, which yet did not know that development of uncongenial and mysterious light. Now the two elder men watched the younger with regret, amazement, and impatience equal to their mutual incomprehension. He had left the calm regions of philosophy far apart and behind. He had left the safe limits of ecclesiastical restraint. The divine and the philosopher gazed at him with a certain mournful admiration and affectionate anger. Coleridge "poured out an eloquent tribute of his regard," into the ears of Chalmers, "mourning pathetically that such a man should be throwing himself away." They did not comprehend, neither the one nor the other, that nothing in this palpitating human world could be abstracted to that passionate, splendid human soul; that it was as truly his mission to render up love and life, to break his heart, and end his days in conflict with the shows of things, and vehement protestation for the reality, as it was theirs to dream, to ponder, to legislate, to abide the bloodless encounters of argument and thought. They watched him going on to his passion and agony, with wondering hopes that advice and remonstrance might yet save

him; unperceiving that the agony and passion by which this man was to prove the devotion of a loyal heart to his Master's name and person, and unspeakable certainty of spiritual verities, was indeed the true object and purpose of his life.

While Chalmers was still in London, but apparently on the eve of quitting it, and after they had taken leave of each other, the following letter seems to have been written:—

"13 Judd Place, East,
"June 2nd, 1830.

"My dear and kind Friend,—I have at last found the document I referred to. You will find it in the printed Acts of the year 1704, Act xxviii., and from the 6th of certain '*Overtures* concerning Schools and Bursaries, and for instructing youth in the principles of religion;' and is as follows *:—

"There are very many Acts of the Church scattered through these years following the Restoration concerning the advancement of learning, which would, I think, strengthen your hands very much in any undertaking to that effect.

"I had thought to see you to thank you in person for your great kindness to me and my church on this occasion; but the state of my poor boy's health prevents me leaving home for a night. Accept of them now, and be assured of my willingness to repay unto Christ and His Church the kindness which by you He hath shown unto me; and whenever any opportunity occurs of serving you personally, be assured of my readiness.

"I perceive two things in Scotland of the most fearful omen: First, self-sufficient ignorance of theological truth, and a readiness to pride themselves in and boast of it, and to call everything speculation which proposes to advance the bounds, or rather narrow limits, of theological knowledge. My doctrine on our Lord's human nature is as literally the doctrine of the Confessions of the Church as can be—viz., That He took the human nature of the Virgin, that it was thoroughly and completely sanctified in the generation by the work of the Holy Ghost, and underwent no process or progress of sanctification. Yet, through ignorance of the person and office of the Holy Ghost, I perceive the greatest horror to prevail against this truth, and a readiness to adopt one or other of the errors—either that His nature was intrinsically better than ours, or that it underwent a physical change before its assumption into the person of the Son. If you would see, within a short compass, the three opinions brought to the test of the Confessions of Faith, I recommend to you a short anonymous tract, entitled *The Opinions circulating concerning the Human Nature of our Lord brought to Trial before the Westminster Confession of Faith.* You ought to give some study to this point, and stand in the breach for the truth. I have thoroughly gone through the subject of the Incarnation; and if it

* It is unnecessary to quote the extract made by Irving, which bears reference to Chalmers's idea of making theology one of the branches of liberal education.

served you, could at any time give you the history from the beginning of the controversies on this subject, and of its present form. The second thing which grieves and oppresses my heart with respect to poor Scotland, is the hardness of heart manifested in the levity and cruelty with which they speak of others; the zeal and readiness with which they rush to overthrow such men of God as John Campbell; the union of all parties to this end; the scorn with which they regard the signs of the Holy Ghost beginning to be again vouchsafed to the Church; and, if not scorn, the mere juryman way of considering them, as the House of Commons might, without any respect to any existing promise, or probability, or doctrine of any kind upon the subject,—also without any regard to the discernment of the Holy Ghost in us, and even as if the Holy Ghost were merely a sharpener of our natural faculties to detect imposture or to know sincere persons. The substance of Mary Campbell's and Margaret Macdonald's visions or revelations, given in their papers, carry to me a spiritual conviction and a spiritual reproof which I cannot express. Mr Cunningham, of Lainshaw, said to me the other day, that he had seen nothing since the Apostles' days worthy to be compared with a letter of Mary Dunlop's which is written to a person in this city. Thomas Erskine and other persons express themselves more overpowered by the love, and assurance, and unity seen in their prayers and conversations than by the works. Oh, my friend! oh, my dear master! there are works of the Spirit and communications of the Spirit which few of us ever dream of! Let us not resist them when we see them in another. Mind my words when I say, 'The Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland will lay all flat if they be not prevented.' I desire my true love to Mrs Chalmers and Miss Anne. May God give you a prosperous journey!

"Your faithful friend and brother,

"EDWD IRVING."

To all these appeals the man whom Irving addressed, with touching loyalty to the past and its associations, as "my dear master," seems to have made no response whatever. If he examined that momentous question at all, or re-examined it at the entreaty of his friend, whose very life was involved in its consideration, no record remains to prove it. He left the controversy to be settled by the nameless Presbyters of Irvine and Annan, voluntarily making his own learning and influence useless in a controversy most deeply momentous to the Church, and which only the doctors and fathers of the Church ought to have given any deliverance upon. At the crisis then existing, I repeat, Chalmers and his equals permitted this matter, and also the equally important process of Mr Campbell of Row, to be discussed and virtually settled by an untrained country population; a manner of procedure, I presume, justified by the laws of Presbytery, but in the profoundest discordance, not only with reason and justice, but

with the true spirit of a system which professes to hold its authority, not from the people, but from God.

As, I believe, they never met again after this year, I add, though a little out of chronology, the farewell mention which Chalmers makes in his diary of their final parting.

"*Oct.* 1830.—Had a very interesting call from Mr Irving between one and two, when I was in bed. He stopped two hours, wherein he gave his expositions; and I gave, at greater length and liberty than I had ever done before, my advices and my views. We parted from each other with great cordiality, after a prayer which he himself offered with great pathos and piety."

So the two made everlasting farewells, so far as this world was concerned, and parted in life, spirit, and career, each retaining a longing love for the other. The friendship of Chalmers, which was not strong enough to draw him personally into the conflict, or to give him any sympathetic understanding of the entire devotion with which Irving abrogated reason itself, in obedience to what he believed the voice of God, was yet enough to raise him above the vulgar lamentations which broke forth, at Irving's death, over his misused talents and sacrificed life. The great Scotch divine knew well that his friend's life was not wasted; and with cumbrous but grand phraseology, and a labouring of tears in his voice, made that eulogium of "the Christian grafted upon the old Roman," by which he acknowledged his consciousness, notwithstanding separation and estrangement, of this primitive, heroic soul.

In the mean time, however, all the tumults in Irving's life were veiled over, and all its hopes subdued, by the fluttering of a baby life, as it waned and declined towards the grave, which already had swallowed up so many blossoms of his existence. This profound domestic anxiety gave him, as was natural, a deeper trembling interest in the miraculous reports that reached him. The command of intense and undoubting faith which had raised Mary Campbell from her sick-bed, might still raise that declining infant, whose baby days were numbered. From the little bedside he gazed out wistfully upon the horizon where miraculous influences seemed hovering, but had not yet revealed themselves; hoping in the prayers of the Church, in the faith of the saints, in the intervention of the Lord himself, when earthly hope was over. It is not possible to enter into this phase of his life without perceiving the heart-breaking glimmer of terrible hope and expectation which mingles with the elevated and

lofty anticipations of a new outpouring of the Spirit, and gives a certain colour to the father's hopes and prayers.

"My darling boy," he writes, "is very poorly. We have no dependance upon human help. Nothing but that power of hearing and answering prayer offered by the Church, for the testimony of which, as still resident in the Church, I have stood these many years, and for which these despised Row people are now suffering, can bring my dear Samuel from his present weakness back again to strength. Oh, my dear A——, tell me when this distinction of the works of the Spirit into ordinary and extraordinary arose? There is no such thing in the Scriptures. I believe the Holy Ghost is as mighty in the Church, and, but for our unbelief, would be as apparent, as ever He was. I pray you to be upon your guard against speaking evil of any mighty work which you may hear of in the Church; for in the last days God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh."

Such seems to have been as yet his attitude in respect to the supernatural commotions in the west of Scotland. And there is no evidence that as yet they had extended to London, or appeared in his own immediate surroundings. Those surroundings, however, had modified and changed as the years grew. New friends, bound together by the close and peculiar links of prophetic study; new followers detached out of other Churches by his influence, and adhering to him with all the closeness of choice and personal election, had joined the old friends and faithful Churchmen of former days, with a more jealous and fervid allegiance. Minds, to whose latent enthusiasm his eloquence gave the quickening thrill, and who had followed him so far with ever-rising thoughts, that it became natural now to follow him whithersoever his fervent inspiration might lead, and to believe in everything he thought possible, had glided into the circle closest to him, surrounding his anxious soul, in its troubles, with a dangerous readiness of sympathy and assent. Among them were men on whose friendship he reposed with all the characteristic trust of his nature; and women who served him unweariedly with willing pen as amanuenses, proud of their office. These closest friends watched with himself, with kindred eagerness, the flushings of light upon the distant firmament. And to him it was always easier to believe the miraculous than the mean and common. By right of his nature, he understood a thousand times better how God could bestow and lavish the extraordinary gifts of His grace, than how the poor practicabilities of human nature could limit the Divine profusion. It is indeed important to remember, while entering upon this most momentous period, how much attuned to the

miraculous was his fervid genius and absolute lofty tone; and how much the sublimation of his mind gave to all the course of nature that aspect of daily miracle which its wonderful successions present more or less to every thoughtful eye.

In July, another prophetical meeting was appointed to be held at Albury. His child was still ill, indeed hourly progressing towards his end; but supported by the thought that this was a sacred duty, and the direct service of his Master, and also by the assurances given him, by many of his anxious friends, of the prayers they had presented, with full assurance of faith, for the infant's life, Irving ventured to leave the troubled household, where his wife was supported by the presence of her mother and sisters. With what tremblings of love and faith he went, will be seen from the following letters:—

"Albury Park, 1st July, 1830.

"My dearest Wife,—While I am serving God in the house of our common Husband, Christ, you are serving Him in the house of me, your husband, and both of us together fulfilling the portions which our God hath allotted us. . . . . Much have I thought, and much have I prayed to God for you and our dear children, especially for our beloved Samuel; and though I cannot say that God hath given me assured faith of his recovery, I can say that He hath given me a perfect resignedness to His will, which I believe to be the precious preparation for the other. For until our faith and prayer spring out of resignation—'Not my will but Thine be done'—it is asking amiss to gratify not the life of God, but the life of nature, which in us, and all the members of Christ, ought to be crucified and dead. Last night I was troubled with some visions and dreams which afflicted me; but this morning, having arisen early, I found great consolation in prayer to God. In my prayers I seem to forget my own trials in the trials of the Church. I am carried away from my own pain to the wound of the daughter of my people. It is very curious how I am always brought back to the children through you, my partner in their care, and now the whole bearer of it. 'Be careful for nothing,' but in everything, by prayer and supplication, make your request known unto God, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep you. We arrived here at half-past four, not in time to write; and I took up the time till dinner in expressing some thoughts, preparatory to my next number of the Apocalypse. . . . . The subject to-day has been the Jews, which always yields much matter. Mr Leach opened it, and several have spoken this forenoon with very great power. I feel as if far more light had been afforded me upon this subject than at any time heretofore. I would say there has been more of the spiritual, and less of the literal,—more of the results of wisdom, and less of mere knowledge or learning. I trust it will so continue. Ah me! how little do they know who speak evil of this meeting, what it really is! To me it is the greatest spiritual enjoyment in this world. I try to devote myself with entire heart to my Father's business, and to

repose you and my dear babes with entire confidence upon His care. If I am often invaded by the thoughts and fears of a father, I lift up my soul to Him who is the Father. What a blessing to have a faithful wife! Had not you been what God's grace has made you, I would not have been here. Had you signified your wish that I should remain, or even faltered in your consent, I should not have been here. To you, my dear wife, the Church owes whatever benefit I may be of now; and surely I never felt more the duty of addressing myself to the Lord's work. Indeed, but for your bearing and forbearing with me, what might I at this day not have been, who am now your devoted husband, and desiring to be the faithful servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. God reward you with much enjoyment and profit in your love to me, for it has been very great! It has come to rain most fearfully for the last hour, and is now pouring down in torrents. God pity the beasts of the earth, and let them not want. The hay is very much damaged here. I desire my most dutiful love to your mother, and my heart-felt thanks for her love to us all; . . . . . and, oh, remember me lovingly to dear Maggie, and tell her to stir up the gift of the Holy Ghost that is in her! and for dear Samuel, God rest and restore him! Farewell, my well-beloved wife. I desire you always to think of me as entirely one with you, even as you are with me. My kind consolations to Dr Carlyle, and my affectionate love to George. Also remember me with kindness to both the servants.

"Your faithful and affectionate husband, EDWD IRVING."

"Albury, 2nd July, 1830.

"MY VERY DEAR WIFE,—I desire to be thankful for the consolation of the letter of the two physicians, and I pray you to thank them both for me for all their care and kindness. Also I am satisfied to know that Dr Farr agrees with the judgment which they have formed and been acting on; and I desire that George and Dr Carlyle should consult together, and do for the dear babe whatever they can, and do it in faith as far as they are enabled; joining prayer of faith to their use of means. Withal my confidence is with the chief Physician, and I feel only the more trust, as I see the case to be the more extreme. One thing I know, that my soul hath been much humbled, and my hard heart much melted by this visitation of the Lord. All the brethren here seem deeply to sympathize with us, and I think there is much grace upon the brethren. . . . . Mr Cunningham is gone away. His company has been very pleasant and profitable. He is in very deed a man of God. He considers himself to have been put out of the Church of Scotland for the testimony of the universal atonement. If indeed it be so, he is honoured. My dear, we must not treat Christ as a common physician, or believe that He has not remedies because the physicians have none. May the Holy Spirit grant us strong and lively faith for our dear child! My love, you must take care of yourself, and not undertake so much without looking up for very much strength by much faith. Let not your much labour for dear baby proceed of carefulness, but of a confidence in God for strength; and if God weaken you, consider it as His sign that you should confide more to others. . . . Mr Hawtrey, Mr Bayford,

and I come in to-morrow, taking a chaise from Ripley. I shall be home about nine o'clock in the evening,

"Your faithful and affectionate husband,

"EDWARD IRVING."

On the 3rd of July he appears to have returned home; and on the 6th this child of prayer gave up its little life, and left another blank in the household so often invaded. Miracle did not interpose to give joy to God's devoted servant. During the whole of this last dread discipline of his life, he served God divinely "for nought," receiving none of the extraordinary graces he believed in. Already the last trial had begun. Miraculously from the edge of the grave, Mary Campbell and Margaret Macdonald in Scotland, and others in England shortly after, near and visible to his eyes and his faith, were brought back in safety to fulfil their existence. But it was not so that God dealt with His loyal and forlorn soldier. The draught of joy, of glorious proof and assurance, that would have refreshed his soul, was withheld from his lips. If he turned away sighing, with a pang of disappointment added to his sorrow, he never paused or slackened, on that account, in the faith which did not depend upon personal blessings; but watched, with an interest unabated, the new miraculous dispensation, which had not saved his child, but which yet he trusted in as divine and true.

It was this child, I think, who died so late in the week as to leave no time for the afflicted father to find a substitute for his Sunday duties. He preached in his own church the day after; taking for his text the words of David—"I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." Persons who were present have described to me, almost with a sob of recollection, the heart-breaking pathos and solemnity of this service; and no one can have read his letters at the time of his first child's death, without being able to realize in some degree the outburst of ineffable anguish and rejoicing which must have been wrung from him by such a necessity. They say he went tearless and fasting through that dark Sabbath; and coming in from his pulpit, went straight to the little coffin, and flinging himself down by it, gave way to the agony of a strong man's grief—grief which was half or wholly prayer—an outcry to the one great Confidant of all his troubles, the faithful Lord who yet had *not* interposed to save.

Shortly after, Irving took his mourning wife and the one little daughter who was still spared to him, and whose health seems to have been fragile enough to keep them anxious on her account also, to Albury, from whence he

writes to Mrs Martin an account of their journey and welfare; after arriving "in the cool of one of the sweetest evenings which was ever seen," as he says with a sacramental hush of grief breathing from his words—

"Maggie has been running about with all manner of cheerfulness and joy. The day is delightful, and the scene one of the most enchanting you ever saw. The house is large and cool; the manners of it put every one at their ease; and I fondly hope it may be the means of restoring my wife and child. I desire to express my great sense of your kindness to them and to us all during the late trial of divine Providence, as during others which you have witnessed and shared with us. We must not murmur, but seek to know the end of the Lord, and to submit to His gracious will. Many a time I desire to be with my children; and I hope we shall be all gathered to His congregation ere long: for I believe the day of His coming draweth nigh, and that before these judgments fall out we shall be taken to Himself and receive the morning star. I cannot but feel the greatest interest in the things taking place in Scotland. The Church of Christ is recovering from a long sleep, and the false brethren who are mingled with the true are ready to resist her new activity; and a third party of worthy and pious people are perplexed what to think of it. I pray you, and all who wish well to the Church, but cannot clearly discern your way in the conflict of opinions, to observe the fruits of the two parties, and in this way to discover the true from the false prophets. This is the counsel of our great Counsellor, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.'"

The melancholy family took their autumn holiday sadly, and, so far as Irving was concerned, laboriously as always. From Albury they went to Ireland, to visit Lady Powerscourt; from whose house Mrs Irving writes to her sister.

"On Monday we left London at 7 A.M., and reached Bath before 7 P.M. . . . . Shortly after, some gentlemen, whom Mr E—— has induced to study the Scriptures with him, assembled to spend the evening with us. These kind friends had made arrangements for Edward preaching at Bath. He did preach, and was said to have had a larger congregation than was ever seen before at Bath in a morning. We dined early, and our kind host accompanied us in his own chaise to Bristol. Several other friends followed us. . . . Here again Edward preached to a large and crowded audience. The packet was not to sail for Dublin till 5 P.M.; so we spent part of the morning walking about; and Edward passed a pleasant hour with the Rev. Robert Hall. . . .

"We landed about 10 P.M. on the Dublin quay; so we went to a hotel for the night, and next forenoon proceeded to Powerscourt. Here we met a kind, hearty welcome. . . . Next morning we drove out a few miles to visit a waterfall. . . . . On our return at three o'clock, there was a great gathering to hear Edward preach. After dinner Lady Powerscourt and Edward set out to a Mr Kelly's, near Dublin, where he met many clergymen. On Sabbath he preached twice in

Dublin: on Monday he again preached twice, and came here to a late dinner; there were several clergymen to meet him. Tuesday he preached at Bray. On Wednesday he attended a clerical meeting; upwards of thirty clergymen, some laymen, and a few ladies present. Lady Powerscourt and I stayed at a clergyman's near Dalgony, where dear Edward arrived at half-past five o'clock, snatched a hasty dinner, and preached at a little after six to a large and most attentive audience;—a most delightful and profitable discourse, and which, we have since learnt, made a very deep impression on many, and was understood by the poorest of the people. . . . . On Thursday morning we went together and attended a meeting of the Bible Society at Wicklow. Edward preached thirteen times in eight days."

This gigantic holiday work seems to have been imposed upon him, without the slightest compunction, wherever he went; parties assembling to make all they could out of the great preacher, after a twelve hours' journey, and private conferences filling up every hour which was not occupied in public labour. "You know well from my feeling and acting with regard to dear Edward," says his wife, with wifely simplicity, "that I am not one who am continually in fear about health, when a man is doing the Lord's work." And indeed there seems no leisure in this incessant round of occupation either for fears of health or precautions to preserve it. An account of his preaching in Dublin, on this occasion, is given in one of the Irish papers of the time (*Saunders's News-Letter*, 18th Sept. 1830), as follows:—

"The Rev. Edward Irving, who our readers may recollect is minister of the Caledonian chapel in London, preached an able and admirable discourse yesterday, at the Scots' chapel. . . . This place of worship was not only crowded to suffocation, but several hundreds assembled outside on benches placed for their accommodation in the yard. The reverend preacher was placed at the south-west window, the frame of which had been previously removed, from which he was audibly heard by the external as well as internal portion of the congregation. We observed many highly respectable Roman Catholic gentlemen present; among them were Messrs Costello, Nugent, and other members of the late Catholic Association."

A month later, on his return to London, Irving himself thus related the most beautiful incident of his Irish travels, to his sister-in-law Elizabeth, who was then at Kirkcaldy, in the paternal house.

"London, 13th October, 1830.

"My dear Sister,—Though I have but a very short moment, I will not let Mr Hamilton go without sending you my love and blessing. I leave to him to inform you how our matters in the Presbytery at present stand, both with respect to Mr Scott and myself. Of this I

have no fear, that the Lord is the strength of all His faithful people, and that we are contending for the foundation of the truth when we maintain that Christ was holy in spite of the law of the flesh working in Him as in another man; but in Him never prevailing as it does in every other man. It was my turn to preach before the Presbytery, and I spent two of the most gracious hours of my life in opening the subject of the Church as a co-essential part of the purpose of God, with the Incarnation of the Son, unto which this was the preparation and likewise the way, and all the means and all the life of it. Mr Brown, our missionary,* sees in all respects with me, and said there was not a word in my discourse wherein he took not pleasure, and that the statement on the humanity was in every tittle satisfactory to him.

"My dear Isabella and Maggie are at Lady Olivia Sparrow's; . . . Miss Macdonald is there also: they are well. . . . What do you think of this little song:

'Come, my little lambs,
And feed by my side,
And I will give you to eat of my body,
And to drink of the blood of my flesh,
And ye shall be filled with the Holy Ghost,
And whosoever believeth not on me
Shall be cast out;
But he that believeth on me
Shall feed with me
Beside my Father.'

"It has not metre nor regular measure, and yet there is a fine rhythm in it; and I daresay your father would say it might be very well set to music. You will say, who made it? I will tell you. When the Countess of Powerscourt, after her noble and Christian entertainment of us, thought it good to bring us in her own carriage to the waterside at Kingstown, and the boat was not arrived by reason of the terrible west wind, we went into the inn; and Isabella, as her case required, was resting on the sofa, Lady Powerscourt sitting before the fire with Maggie on her knee, and I between her ladyship and my wife. Maggie broke the silence; for God had given us all three much love for one another, and we were silent, being loath to part. Maggie said: 'Lady Powerscourt, shall I sing you a song?' 'Yes, Maggie,' said her ladyship. Whereupon the child, modulating her voice most sweetly, poured forth these divine words. When she was finished, her ladyship said: 'Does not that comfort you?' But I wist not it was the child's making, and understood not what she meant; but perceiving she wished not to explain further (it was for fear of begetting vain conceit in the child), I said no more: but Maggie left her ladyship's knee, and went to the other side of the room. Then I said to Isabella, 'Where did Maggie learn that song, and who taught it her?' She said: 'Nowhere, and no one taught her.' I called the child and said:

* This gentleman had succeeded Mr Scott when the latter was called to the Woolwich church, and was in reality Irving's assistant or curate.

'Maggie, my dear, who taught you that song?' She said: 'Nobody. I made it one day after bathing;' and so I thought upon the words, 'Out of the mouth of babes and of sucklings I have ordained praise,' and I was comforted. Read it to your father and mother, and tell my dear sister Margaret to set it to a tune and sing it of an evening at her house when she goes home; and think of the sweet and of the sad hours she, as well as you, dear Elizabeth, have passed with us. Give my love to your dear parents as also mine, and to all the family. Be filled with love, my dear child, to all men, and have the mind of Christ. Think not of yourself, but of your Lord, and of the glory of your God. . . . . Be steadfast and immovable in the truth, and give up all things for it. Farewell! God be with you, and bless you and your husband, and bring you back in safety!

"From your faithful brother and pastor,

"Edwd Irving."

Thus the five-year-old Maggie, sole blossom at that time of the two saddened lives she cheered, comforted her father's soul. He paints the little picture with minute quaint touches, which would be like Dutch painting, were they not always full of a pathetic tenderness which has no accordance with that name. The scene lives before us in all its profound simplicity and silent emotion, distinct and vivid as reality. It is pleasant to know that this child was very like her father; grew up to have his voice, his features, something of his power of winning hearts; and died in full womanhood, but in youth, untouched by any vulgar fate. The "dear sister Margaret," whom he exhorts to sing this touching childish utterance, was then a bride, just about going to her new home in the hereditary manse of Monimail, where her venerable grandsire had died not very long before. To her and to her husband, the following letter of congratulation was shortly thereafter addressed.

"Brampton Court, October, 1830.

"My dear Margaret and James,—I am just setting out to preach at Huntingdon, and take up my pen, before starting, to give you my benediction. May the Lord fulfil upon you the prayers which we have prayed for you, and make you as those that preceded you at Monimail! I cannot present to you two better examples. Dear Margaret, be in dutiful subjection to your husband and strengthen his hands in every good work,—'good works in her husband to promote.' Dear James, be a loving husband, a guardian, and a guide to our Margaret; she is a precious person. God be your guide and your portion! His truth is your common rule, and His love your communion and fellowship. . . . .

"Your faithful brother,

"Edwd Irving."

At Brampton Court, from which this letter is written, he was, as usual, overwhelmed with supererogatory labours "Dear Edward hurried down from London again, to be with me as soon as possible," writes his wife. "There are a goodly number of hearers, and hearers *all day long* here; so that yesterday Edward spoke almost constantly from nine in the morning till eleven at night, what with expositions, dictating for an hour, and answering questions." How either mind or body sustained this perpetual pouring forth, it seems difficult to imagine; but though this very letter proves that he still *wrote*, dictating to some of his faithful amanuenses, it is a relief to believe that much of this must have been extempore. Years before, he had written a brief and striking note on Samuel Martin's Bible. "My brother, no man is furnished for the ministry, till he can unclasp his pocket Bible, and wherever it opens, discourse from it largely and spiritually to the people." Nothing but such a capacity could have carried him through the incessant calls upon him; which indeed are curious exemplars how those pious nobles who are nursing fathers and mothers to religion, having laid hold upon such a notable and willing labourer, do their best to work him to death.

It is very evident, at the same time, that he never had a thought or conception of saving himself. A glimpse of another unsuspected branch of labour gleams out in a speech reported in the newspapers as having been made at one of the May meetings in this year, a meeting in behalf of the Destitute Seamen's Asylum, at which the great preacher appeared to "bear testimony to the excellence of the institution from personal observation, having been accustomed to minister to the seamen once a fortnight. He had witnessed," he says, "the spectacle of six or seven houseless seamen herding at the bottleworks at Shadwell, for the sake of the warmth," but had afterwards found "from 130 to 150 seated in comfort to a homely meal, with such a spirit of order maintained among them, that never in one instance had his holy avocation been disturbed by any act of irreverence." So far as any one can see, he had nothing in the world to do with these sailors, with all his own manifold affairs in hand; but to a soul never in any difficulty to know who was his neighbour, such brotherly offices were more restful than rest.

On his return to London from these laborious wanderings, he writes to his wife,—"The Lord has preserved my flock in love and unity; and we assembled on Sunday as

numerous as at any former period. Our meeting of Session was very delightful. . . . . Mr Henderson and Dr Thompson are fully convinced of the reality of the hand of God in the west country work, and so is Mr Cardale. Pray for Mary Campbell; she is under some temptations." But while this was a matter of constant reference and anxious expectation, and while restoration to health, as miraculous and extraordinary as that which happened at the Gairloch, had startled into still warmer excitement the believers about London in the wonderful case of Miss Fancourt, Irving's mind was still much more entirely occupied with the momentous matter of doctrine on which so great a commotion had lately risen. Mr Maclean's case was not yet decided; but Mr Scott had, as has been mentioned, formally withdrawn his from the consideration of the Presbytery of London, in consequence of the objections against ordination, and some other points of doctrine, which had arisen in his mind. The Presbytery of London was reduced in number at the moment. Several of those ministers who came to the conclusion, which a few months before gave so much comfort to Irving, seem to have left its bounds. The little ecclesiastical court was balked but emboldened by the discussion, which had been rendered fruitless by the withdrawal of Mr Scott; and now a bolder move suggested itself to one of its members, who resolved upon bringing the great preacher himself to the bar.

This process and its issue he himself describes, with his usual minuteness, in the preface to *Christ's Holiness in the Flesh*, from which we have already quoted. After reference to the discussion in Mr Scott's case, the narrative goes on as follows:—

"Some time after this, one of the brethren of the Presbytery signified to me by letter his purpose of calling my book into question the next day after he wrote, when the Presbytery was to meet; to whom I replied that this was to proceed against the divine rule of Christ, which required him to speak to myself privately, and then with witnesses, before bringing a matter before the Church. In this he acquiesced, and did not make any motion concerning it; but another brother did, when I solemnly protested against the proceeding; and the Presbytery would not entertain it, but required that I should be privately conferred with. Many weeks passed, but no one of them came near me, until the next meeting of the Presbytery was just at hand. Then the first mover of the matter waited upon me, and I laid before him the tract, instructing him to point me out the objectionable parts, when, to my amazement, he either would not or could not; for though he shuffled over its leaves, he could not alight upon anything; and then at length he said he would write what he objected to. But

he never did it. I stood engaged to be in Ireland, and could not be present at the next meeting of Presbytery; yet in my absence he sought to force it on, and was again prevented by the Presbytery. When I returned, being appointed with two other members of Presbytery (for besides myself there were but three ministers in all), to confer with the young preacher referred to above, as desiring to withdraw his application for ordination, because he could not sign the Westminster Confession of Faith; when the conference was over, these two brethren did request that we might converse together upon the tract; and they pointed out two or three passages in it to which they objected, for which kindness I was very thankful. But still the brother who had stood forth from time to time as my accuser took no opportunity of conferring with me whatever. And when, at the next meeting, he brought forward his motion indicting my book, and reading from it many passages to which he objected, I stood forth, and having first disabused the Presbytery, and also the people, of the errors laid to my charge, as if I taught that Christ sinned in instead of sanctifying our nature, I moved that the contumacious brother should be censured for setting at nought both the canon of the Lord and the order of the Presbytery, and be required to proceed regularly. But, to my astonishment and vexation, I found the very same Presbytery willing to indulge him, and these very members who had themselves sanctioned their own order by conferring privately with me. I then rose the second time, and signified to them what I could and what I could not submit to, the adjudication of that body of three ministers and as many elders, from whom I had no appeal. Everything which affected my conduct amongst them as a brother, I would submit to free censure and rebuke if necessary; but nothing affecting my standing as a preacher and ordained minister of the Church of Scotland, and as the minister of the National Scotch Church in Regent Square, who, by the trust-deed, must be ordained by a Presbytery in Scotland, and not by the Presbytery of London. It was argued that I stood wholly and entirely at their tribunal; and when I perceived that there was nothing for it but either to give up my standing as a minister of Christ to the judgment of these six men, or to dissolve my voluntary connection with them, I resolved of the two evils to choose the least, and not to submit the authority of the Church of Scotland to the verdict of any six men in Christendom. And though I have tried my conscience much, I feel that I did right. But before taking this final step, I rose the third time and conjured them by every tie and obligation to Christ, to the Church, to myself personally, to my large and numerous flock, to the memory of my brotherly labours with and for them, to my acts of service and kindness to them individually, which I will not here, and did not there, enumerate, to take the regular process of the Lord's appointing, and I doubted not all would be well. Which when they would not do, I arose and went forth from them, appealing my cause to the Church of Scotland, who alone have rightful authority over me and my flock..... The Presbytery, notwithstanding my solemn separation from their association, and likewise the separation of the elders of the National Church, and the whole Church with us, proceeded with their measures against me, and carried things to the utmost stretch of their power. For all

which they are answerable at the bar of the Head of the Church, and not to me."

This somewhat wilful and lofty step of denying the jurisdiction of the London Presbytery, left Irving in an isolated position, which, though it did not in any respect, as yet, injure his external standing, touched his brotherly heart. He seems to have intrenched himself stoutly, like the impracticable visionary man he was, behind that divine rule of procedure which has long ceased to be, if ever it was, the rule of ecclesiastical proceedings. To require men to do, even in Church matters, exactly and literally what their Lord tells them, is a thing few think of attempting; and the ordinary spectator will doubtless sympathize to some extent with that hapless Presbytery of London, whom the great preacher, in the simplicity of his heart, called to private conference with himself, before they ventured on public condemnation. He was not aware, as his unfortunate accuser was, that in private conference the weaker man naturally goes to the wall; nor could comprehend, in his ingenuous greatness, how antagonists, so unfit to cope with him individually, might be glad to huddle together, and express, in what language of condemnation they could, their confused sense of something beyond them which they could neither consent to nor understand. Nothing can be more expressive than that pertinacious agreement which, when they were thus put to it, united the alarmed presbyters, each man of whom well knew that, in private conference, he must infallibly break down and yield. They seized their opportunity with a vulgar but wise perception of it, refusing the perilous ordeal of private personal encounter; and with a lofty indignation, which might be almost arrogance, were one to name it harshly, the accused arose and went forth. He had no insight into that expedient of weakness. He called that harshly injustice, which was mere fright and natural human poltroonery—and so left them, giving, in his own elevated thoughts, a certain grandeur to the petty persecution. Henceforth he was alone in his labours and troubles; no triumphant gladness of conscious orthodoxy, because the Presbytery had so decided, could hereafter give assurance to his own personal certainty. They of his own house had lifted up their heel against him. Notwithstanding all his independence, the profound loyalty of his soul was henceforward balked of its healthful necessities. The only authority which could now harm or help him,—the sole power he recognized,—was distant in Scotland, apart from the scene of

his warfare and the knowledge of his work, judging coldly, not even without a touch of jealous prejudice. He was cast unnaturally free of restraint and power; that lawful, sweet restraint, that power endowed with all visionary excellences and graces, to which the tender dutifulness so seldom wanting to great genius naturally clings. It was hard,—it was sad,—it was almost fatal work for Irving. He could not live without that support and solace; and when this disjunction was accomplished, he found his presbytery, his authority, the needful concurrence and command which were indispensable to him, in other things.

In these circumstances the Session of the National Scotch Church drew up a statement to the following effect:

"London, 15th December, 1830.

"We, the Minister, Missionary, Elders, and Deacons of the National Scotch Church, Regent Square, feel it a duty we owe to ourselves, to the congregation to which we belong, to the Church of Christ, and to all honest men, no longer to remain silent under the heavy charges that are brought against us, whether from ignorance, misapprehension, or wilful perversion of the truth; and therefore we solemnly declare—

"That we utterly detest and abhor any doctrine that would charge with sin, original or actual, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom we worship and adore as 'the very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father; who, when the fulness of the time was come, did take upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin;' 'very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man;' who in the days of His flesh was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth;' 'who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God;' 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,' 'a Lamb without blemish and without spot;' in which offering of Himself 'He made a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in our behalf.' And we further declare that all our peace of conscience, progress in sanctification, and hope of eternal blessedness, resteth upon the sinlessness of that sacrifice, and the completeness of that atonement, which He hath made for us as our substitute.

"And, finally, we do solemnly declare that these are the doctrines which are constantly taught in this Church, agreeably to the standards of the Church of Scotland, and the Word of God.

"Edward Irving, Minister.
David Brown, Missionary.

Archibald Horn,
David Blyth,
Wm. Hamilton,
Duncan Mackenzie,
James Nisbet,
} Elders.

Charles Vertue,
Alex. Gillispie, Jun.
John Thomson,
J. C. Henderson,
Thomas Carswell,
David Ker,
} Deacons."

In the midst of these personal agitations and ecclesiastical troubles, a quaint and characteristic public incident diversifies the history. The congregation at Regent Square, under Irving's inspiration, had decided upon presenting a petition to the King, calling upon him to appoint a national fast. The petition itself, a powerful and eloquent production, like all Irving's personal appeals, is now only to be found in collections of the tracts and pamphlets of the period. Accompanied by three of his elders, he went to Lord Melbourne by appointment, to present this singular address. While they waited in the ante-room the premier's leisure, Irving called upon his somewhat amazed and embarrassed companions to kneel and pray for "favour in the sight of the King's minister," as a private letter describes it. When they were admitted to the jaunty presence of that cheerful functionary, the preacher read over to him at length the remarkable document he came to present; during the reading of which, we are told, "Lord Melbourne was much impressed; and also by some solemn things Mr Mackenzie (one of the elders) said, on the only means of saving this country." When they took leave, the minister "shook hands heartily" with Irving, who, holding that hand in his gigantic grasp, "implored the blessing and guidance of God on his administration." A scene more remarkable could scarcely be. On one side an impersonation of the good-hearted, cheerful man of the world, bland by temper and policy, to whom most things were humbug, and truth a fluctuating possibility; and confronting him the man of God, in utter loyalty and simplicity, mournful over falsehood, but little suspicious of it, to whom all truth was absolute, and hesitation or compromise unknown. They confronted each other for a moment, a wonderful spectacle; the prophet soul bestowing lofty benedictions upon the awed and wondering statesman. It is a picture with which we may well close the record of this momentous year.

CHAPTER XVI.

1831.

THE year 1831 dawned upon Irving solemnly, full of all the prognostics of approaching fate. He was himself separ-

ated from the little ecclesiastical world which had hitherto represented to him the Church of his country and his heart. The Presbytery, in which he had heretofore found a sufficient symbol of ecclesiastical authority, and which stood in the place of all those venerable institutions of Church government and legislation on which he had lavished the admiration and reverence of his filial heart, had rejected him, and been rejected by him. While still strenuously upholding his own title to be considered a minister of the Church of Scotland, he stood isolated from all the fellowships and restraints of Presbyterianism, virtually separated—though always refusing to believe in or admit that separation—from the Church upon which he still and always looked with so much longing love. His closest and most prized friends were in actual conflict with the same ecclesiastical authorities; or at least with the popular courts and theological controversialists who were all that Scotland had to represent the grave and patient authority of the Church. Mr Campbell, of Row, after years of apostolical labour, the efficacy of which was testified by the whole district which his influence pervaded, a man whose vital piety and apostolical life nobody could impugn, and Mr Maclean, younger, less wise, but not less a faithful servant of his Master, were both struggling for bare existence in the Church, and approaching the decision of their fate within her bounds. Their names were identified and united with that of the solitary champion in London, whose forlorn but dauntless standard had risen for years among all the enmities which can be encountered by man. He who had not hesitated to adopt the cause of both with warm enthusiasm, stood far off in his solitude, watching, with a heart that ached over his own powerlessness to avert it, the approaching crisis, at which his beloved Church was, according to his conception, to deny the truth, and condemn her own hopes and future life in the persons of these "defenders" at her bar. Nearer home, Mr Scott had temporarily withdrawn from the contest, which, in his case also, was to be decided at the sitting of the General Assembly, in the ensuing May. Without even that beloved henchman at his elbow, supported only by an assistant, who, doubtless entirely conscientious and trustworthy so long as his support lasted, was yet to fail him in his hour of need, Irving stood alone, at the head of his Session, clinging to that last prop of the ecclesiastical order in which during all his former life his soul had delighted. Condemned by his Presbytery, and held in suspicion by the distant Church to which he owed allegiance, the little local con-

sistory stood by him loyally, without an appearance as yet of division. Every man of them had come forward in his defence and justification, to set their name and credit to the stake on which he had put his heart and life. They were his earliest and closest friends in London, stout Churchmen, pious Christians, sufficiently Scotch and ecclesiastical, attached to all the traditions of the Church, to make it possible to forget that they stood, a little recalcitrant community, and "inferior court," in opposition to the orthodox jurisdiction of the next superior circle of rulers. Minister and Session alike delivered themselves triumphantly from this dilemma, by direct reference to the Church of Scotland. It is possible that a little unconscious jesuitry lay in this appeal; for the Church of Scotland was as powerless to interfere on the southern side of the Tweed, as the Bishop of London would be on the north; and so long as the minister of the National Scotch Church refrained from asking anything from her, could not interfere, otherwise than by distant and ineffectual censures, with his proceedings. Such, however, was the attitude they assumed; a position not dissimilar from that of certain English clergymen in Scotland, who, professing to be of the English Church, refuse the jurisdiction of the Scottish Episcopal, and live bishopless, and beyond the reach of government, in visionary allegiance to their distant mother.

In the same spring, while still explaining and re-explaining to his friends, with inexhaustible patience, his special doctrine, Irving was also preparing another work on the same subject, published shortly afterwards under the title of *Christ's Holiness in Flesh; the Form and Fountain-head of all Holiness in Flesh.* The preface of this book consists of a long, minute, and animated narrative of the progress of the controversy as far as it had proceeded, and especially of the dealings of the London Presbytery with himself, to which I have already repeatedly referred. The story is told with a certain flush of indignation and self-assertion, as of a man unable to deny his own consciousness of being himself a servant and soldier of Jesus Christ, more zealous and more fully acknowledged of his Master, than those who, in Christ's name, had condemned him. The book itself is one which he seems to have been satisfied with as a fit and careful statement of his views. "I should like that it were sent among the clergy," he writes to his friend Mr Macdonald, in Edinburgh, "I think it will be popular enough to pay its own expenses in time." In the same letter he declares that "I in-

tend being in Edinburgh at the Assembly, if I should crawl and beg my way. God give me both strength of body and mind to endure what is before me! I intend proceeding by Galloway and Dumfriesshire; and desire to preach in Edinburgh twice a day the first week of the Assembly; the second, to be at leisure for conference and business." This intention, however, he did not succeed in carrying out. The still more engrossing interest then springing up at home, or motives of prudence, strange to his usual mode of procedure, kept Irving away from the actual arena at that momentous period. He did not go to Edinburgh for that Assembly, nor thrust himself into conflict with the Church. What happened there he watched with the utmost eagerness and interest; but the prudence of his friends, or his own interest in matters more immediately calling his attention, kept him at that moment from personal collision with the excited and jealous courts of the Scotch Church.

He did, however, all that an earnest man could do to influence their proceedings. Having already exhausted himself in explanation and appeal to the tribunal where he still hoped to find mercy and wisdom in the case of his friends, and patience and consideration for himself, he did the only thing which remained possible to his devout and believing heart. He besought the prayers of his people for the direction of the ecclesiastical parliament. In the brightening mornings of spring he invited around him the members of the Church to pray for wisdom and guidance to the General Assembly—an Assembly which, to many of these members, had been hitherto little known, and less cared for. He collected not only his staunch Scottish remnant, but his new and still more fervent disciples, who knew nothing of Scotland or her Church, to agree upon this thing which they should ask of God. They met at half-past six in the morning for this object; and there, in the Church so fondly called National, Irving, fervent and impassioned, presented the prayers —not only of the Scotch Churchmen who understood the matter fully, but of the puzzled English adherents who believed in *him*, and were content to join their supplications with his for a matter so near his heart—on behalf of the ecclesiastical rulers who were about to brand and stigmatize him as a heretic. This prayer-meeting for the benefit of the General Assembly, was the origin of the early morning service which has now become one of the characteristic features in the worship of the "Catholic Apostolic Church." Engaged in these daily matins on their behalf, Irving re-

mained absent from the Assembly and the people of Edinburgh at a crisis so interesting and important, but did not the less follow the deliberations, in which he himself and his friends were so deeply concerned, with breathless interest and anxious attention.

Neither his personal activity, however, nor the popularity which had so long followed him, was impaired by the anxiety of the crisis, or by the rush of his thoughts in another direction. He still spent himself freely in all manner of voluntary services. In April, his sister-in-law Elizabeth, Mrs Hamilton, mentions, in her home letters, that "Edward has commenced a Thursday morning lecture, besides the Wednesday evening. He is going through John's Gospel in the morning, and through Genesis in the evening. The Sunday evening services are crowded to overflowing at present. The subject is the second coming of Christ, from the last chapter of 2nd Peter." He is also still visible at public meetings, taking his share in the general interests of religion everywhere; labouring yet again to convince the Bible Society to sanctify its business with prayer; giving up, as he himself relates, "all his spare time to the Jewish Institution," and getting into private embroilments by reason of his friendliness towards strangers—Dr Chalmers at this time being, as it appears, irritated with Irving and some of his friends on account of their generous patronage of a Jew, whom the Doctor, too, would willingly have patronized as a convert, but was not content to admit into all the equalities of Christian fellowship. If ever there was a time when Irving, longing for the adulation which attended his earlier years, and smarting from the neglect which followed, or is supposed, with a dramatic completeness not always inevitable in real life, to have followed it, turned aside to woo back fashion by singularity, now at last must have occurred that moment. But it is not the aspect of a feverish ambition, straining after the applause of the crowd, which meets our gaze in this man, now lingering, trembling upon the threshold of his fate. Fashion has been gone for years—years of wholesome, generous, gigantic labour; and on the very eve of the time when strange lights flushing over his firmament were anew to raise curiosity to frenzy, and direct against him all the outcries of propriety and all the transitory excitement of the mob, it is a figure all unlike the disappointed prophet, ready rather to call down fire from heaven than to suffer himself to fade from the public recollection, which reveals itself before our eyes. Instead of that hectic apparition, there stood in the crowded heart of Lon-

don a man whom the world had never been able to forget; who needed no extraordinary pretence of miracle to recall his name to men's recollections; whose name, on the contrary, had only to be connected with any obscure ecclesiastical process to make that and everything connected with it the object of immediate attention and interest, jealous public guardians flashing their lights upon it, for the sake of the one name always intelligible through the gloom. London journals grew to be familiar with the technical terms of Scotch Presbyterianism for Irving's sake. The English public suffered strange forms of ecclesiastical conflict to occupy its regard, because he was in the midst. This was little like the dismal neglect which wakes mad fancies in the heart of genius. Wherever he went, crowds waylaid his steps, turning noble country-houses into impromptu temples, and seizing the stray moments of his leisure with jealous eagerness. His own Church was crowded to overflowing at those services which were least exclusively congregational. Amid all this his own eyes, burning with life and ardour, turned not to fashion or the great world, not to society or the givers of fame, but were bent with anxious gaze upon that "grey city of the North," where the Scotch Assembly gathered, and where, as he conceived, the beloved Church of his fathers was herself at the bar to acknowledge or deny the truth. While he stood thus, the moment was approaching when another chapter of his history—the darkest, the saddest, the last, perhaps in some respects the most splendid of all—was to dawn upon Irving. At this crisis, when he has been supposed to be wandering wildly astray,—a disappointed notoriety—a fanatic enthusiast—a man in search of popular notice and applause, here is the homely picture of him in the words of his sister Elizabeth; a picture only heightened out of its calm of sensible simplicity by the tender touch of domestic love:—"Edward continues remarkably well, notwithstanding his many labours," writes this affectionate witness. "On Sunday we did not get home from the morning service till two o'clock. He came with us; and after dinner William and he went to visit two families in sickness; took tea at Judd Place, and went to church, half an hour before service, to talk with young communicants; went through the evening service with great animation, preaching a beautiful sermon on 'A new commandment give I unto you;' walked up here again, and William and he went to pray with a child, up at White Conduit House. He then returned home, and was in church next morning as usual at half-past six o'clock. God

gives him amazing strength. The morning meetings continue to be well attended. . . . Dear Edward has had much to bear, and we should suffer with him. He has had strong consolations in the midst of it all; and I think is endeavouring to bear a conscience void of offence towards God and towards all men. He becomes daily more tender, and daily more spiritually wise."

Meantime, while the prayers of the faithful rose for them morning by morning in that distant London Church, echoing the anxious prayers of many an agitated soul in Scotland, the General Assembly met. In the troubles of that solemn period, when the saintly Campbell stood at the bar, to be finally and solemnly cast out of the Church, Mr Scott and Mr Maclean were both involved. The Assembly deposed Mr Campbell for maintaining that Christ died for all men, and that the whole world stood upon a common ground in universal relations to the manifested love of God; and it withdrew from Mr Scott his licence to preach, which, indeed, considering his opposition to various ecclesiastical propositions, was not so remarkable. This notable convocation, however, had still other matters on hand. It settled the case of Mr Maclean, of Dreghorn, by sending him back, upon technical grounds, to his Presbytery, leaving that victim to be baited to death by the inferior court; and, by way of relieving these heavier labours, it launched a passing arrow at Irving. This was done on the occasion of a *Report upon Books and Pamphlets containing Erroneous Opinions*, in approving which a motion was made to the effect that, if at any time the Rev. Edward Irving should claim the privileges of a licentiate or minister of the Church of Scotland, the Presbytery of the bounds should be enjoined to inquire whether he were the author of certain works, and to proceed thereafter as they should see fit. This motion—a more peremptory suggestion having failed, and a contemptuous appeal for toleration, on the score that these works were not calculated to influence any well-informed mind, having also broken down—was carried. This was the first direct authoritative censure pronounced upon Irving. It gave him a personal share in the sorrow and indignation with which a large portion of the devout people of Scotland saw the Church commit itself to a rash decision upon matters so important. And it was in anticipation of some such attack that he wrote as follows, while the Assembly was sitting, to his faithful friend in Edinburgh, apparently just after having heard of the temporary unsuccess of the proceedings against Mr Maclean:—

"London, 26th May, 1831.

. . . . . .

"We have had great joy and thanksgiving over the deliverance which we have had out of the hands of those evangelical doctors, whose violation of all natural affection being most of them intimate friends of my own) and of the law of Christian discipline will no doubt be punished by, as it hath proceeded from, the spirit of reckless violence. Dreading this, I sit down to write you what should be our course of procedure in case the committee ask the Assembly for any judgment against me or my books. I feel that I ought not to lose one iota of my standing as an ordained minister, or even as a man, without an effort, and a strong and steady one, to preserve it. If they shall present any evil report thereupon, and ask the Assembly for a sanction of it, I give Carlyle * full power to appear at the bar for me, and claim for me the privilege of being first communicated with, in order to explain away, as far as I honestly can, the matters of offence; and if I have erred in any expression, to have an opportunity of confessing it; for, however they may labour to separate me and my book, their decision upon my book must materially affect my standing with the Church, and no man ought to suffer loss without the opportunity of defending himself. But if they should found upon their report any proposal to exclude me from the pulpits of Scotland, or to put any mark upon me, then I solemnly protest for a hearing, and an argument, and a libel, and a regular process of trial, with a view to that issue. For though I might and do rejoice in my personal security, I cannot think of the Church being led to give judgment against me, or against the truth, or to bind me up from my natural liberty and right in my own country. I am not anxious about these things, but I am deeply impressed with the duty of contesting every inch of ground with these perverters of the Gospel and destroyers of the vineyard. In leaving this matter in your hands and dear Carlyle's, and, above and over all, in the hands of the Lord, to whom I now commend it, I feel that it will be well cared for. I would not intrude upon the Assembly, or trouble them unnecessarily, but I would lose none of my rights without a controversy for them in the name and strength of the Lord. . . . God has said, London is thy post; take care of that and I will take care of thee. . . Our prayer-meeting is well attended, fully one hundred. I do not yet think that we have had the distinct pouring out of the spirit of prayer. I feel more assurance daily that the Lord is bestowing upon me 'the word of wisdom,' which I take to be the faculty of opening the mysteries of God hidden in the Scriptures. . . . The Lord be with thy spirit!

"Your faithful brother,

"EDWD IRVING."

When the meetings of the Assembly were over, the devout company of worshippers who had offered up daily supplications on its behalf during that crisis, having come to take comfort in these early matins, resolved to continue their meeting, and direct their prayers to interests more immediately their own. It was

* Thomas Carlyle, Esq., advocate, of Edinburgh, who had conducted the case of Mr Maclean.

for the outpouring of the Spirit that they now resolved to ask; for the bestowal of those miraculous gifts of which news came without ceasing from Scotland—which were daily hoped for with gradually increasing intensity among themselves—and which, if once revealed, they did not doubt would be to the establishing of a mighty influence in the great city which surged and groaned around them, a perpetual battle-ground of human passion. For this they prayed in the early quiet of the summer mornings as May brightened into June. To this, the indignant excitement of the ecclesiastical crisis over, Irving turned with eyes which saw no help in man. During the interval, that other question had been gathering force and shape. Miraculous instances of healing were told, and discussed, and proved, and contested, in the London world, as they had been in the anxious local world of which the Gairloch was the centre. Among those who prayed every morning for the extension of this marvel to London, and for the visible manifestation of God and his wonderful works among themselves, there was one at least so intent upon the petition he urged, and so sure that what he asked was in conformity with the will of God, that his anxious gaze almost had power to create upon the horizon the light he looked for. But still there was nothing unearthly or inhuman in the aspect of the man who thus stood between earth and heaven pleading, with a fervour that would not understand denial, for the inspiration promised to the last days. He forgot neither the rights of a man nor the duties of a brother in that solemn and overwhelming expectation. To a heart so high and a spirit so devout, miracle itself, indeed, was rather an unveiling of the ineffable glories always known and felt to be present where God's presence was felt and known, than a breach of the laws of nature, or a harsh though splendid discordance struck among the common chords of life. The heart within him was miraculously akin to all wonders and splendours. It was his cherished and joyful hope to see with human eyes his Master Himself descend to the visible millennial throne; and there was, to his sublimed vision, a certain magnificent probability in the flood of divine utterance and action for which he prayed and waited.

The first intimation of the actual appearance of the expected miraculous gifts is given simply and almost incidentally in a letter, addressed to Mr Story, of Rosneath, dated in July of this year, in which, after exhorting his friend, who had been ill, to "have faith to be healed," Irving proceeds to speak of the ecclesiastical matters, in which both were so deeply interested, as follows:—

"I feel as if it were the duty of every minister of the Church of Scotland to open his pulpit to Campbell and Maclean, and take the consequences; and that the people should no longer hear those ministers who cast them out and the truth of God with them, until these ministers have returned to the preaching of the truth. For they have declared themselves Antichrist in denying that Christ came in the flesh; and they have denied both the Father and the Son. The Church naturally considered is one, but rightly considered is many, according to the number of her ministers; each Church standing or falling with its angel. Now these angels have all declared themselves enemies of Christ and His truth; and I say, therefore, it is the duty of the people to come out and be separate. I am sounding this matter to the bottom, and shall set it forth in regular order. Dear Story, you keep too much aloof from the good work of the Spirit which is proceeding beside you. Two of my flock have received the gift of tongues and prophecy. The Church here is to inquire into it. We had a conference of nearly twenty last Wednesday at Dodsworth's, and we are to have another next Wednesday. Draw not back, brother, but go forward. The kingdom of heaven is only to be won by the brave. Keep your conscience unfettered by your understanding."

It was in July this letter was written, but not until four months later did the new wonder manifest itself publicly. In the interval, notwithstanding his eagerness and strong prepossession in favour of these miraculous pretensions, Irving took the part of an investigator, and, according to his own conviction, examined closely and severely into the wonderful phenomena now presented before him. He explains the whole process with his usual lofty candour in his speech before the London Presbytery, a year later, in which he discloses, at the outset, the profound prepossession and bias in his believing mind, while he is evidently quite unconscious how this could detract in the least from the conscientious severity of the probation to which he subjected the gifted persons. This is, however, so important an element in the matter, and one which throws so touching a light upon all the unthought-of extents to which his faith afterwards carried him—besides being, as he thought, an important particular in proof of the reality of the gifts themselves—that it is worthy of special notice. "I, as Christ's dutiful minister, standing in His room and responsible to Him (as are you all), *have not dared to believe that, when we asked bread, He gave us a stone, and when we asked fish, He gave us a serpent*," he says, out of the simplicity of his devout heart, recognizing only in this complicated matter—which involved so profound a maze of incomprehensible human motives, emotions, and purposes—the devout sincerity of prayer on the one hand, and the certain faithfulness of promise on the other. They had asked their

faithful Master for these wonders of His grace; and when the wonders came, how could the loyal, lofty, unsuspicious soul, confident in the honour and truth of all men as in his own, dare to believe that God, when asked for bread, had given only a stone? But all unaware that by this very sentiment he prejudged the matter, Irving went on to make assurance sure by careful and deliberate investigation, which he accordingly describes as follows:—

"We met together about two weeks before the meeting of the General Assembly, in order to pray that the General Assembly might be guided in judgment by the Lord, the Head of the Church; and we added thereto prayers for the present low state of the Church. We cried unto the Lord for apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, anointed with the Holy Ghost, the gift of Jesus, because we saw it written in God's Word that these are the appointed ordinances for the edifying of the body of Jesus. We continued in prayer every morning, morning by morning, at half-past six o'clock; and the Lord was not long in hearing and in answering our prayers. He sealed first one, and then another, and then another, and then another; and gave them first enlargement of spirit in their own devotions, when their souls were lifted up to God and they closed with him in nearness; He then lifted them up to pray in a tongue which the apostle Paul says he did more than they all. . . . I say as it was with Paul at the proper time, at the fit time, namely, in their private devotions, when they were rapt up nearest to God, the Spirit took them and made them speak in a tongue, sometimes singing in a tongue, sometimes speaking words in a tongue; and by degrees, according as they sought more and more unto God, this gift was perfected until they were moved to speak in a tongue, even in the presence of others. But while it was in this stage I suffered it not in the church, acting according to the canon of the apostle; and even in private, in my own presence, I permitted it not; but I heard that it had been done. I would not have rebuked it, I would have sympathized tenderly with the person who was carried in the Spirit and lifted up; but in the church I would not have permitted it. Then, in process of time, perhaps at the end of a fortnight, the gift perfected itself, so that they were made to speak in a tongue and to prophesy: that is, to set forth in English words for exhortation, for edification, and comfort, for that is the proper definition of prophesying, as was testified by one of the witnesses. Now, when we had received this into the church in answer to our prayers, it became me, as the minister of the church, to try that which we had received. I say it became me, and not another, as minister of the church; and my authority for that you will find in the 2nd chapter of Revelations. . . . . Therefore, when the Lord had sent me what professed to be prophets, what we had prayed for, what the Lord had answered, what had the apparent signs of a prophet speaking with tongues and prophesying and magnifying God,—I then addressed myself to the task, I durst not shrink from it, of trying them, putting them to proof; and if I found them so, permitting them; yea,

giving thanks to Jesus that had heard our prayers, and sent among us that ordinance of prophesying which is said expressly to be for the edifying of the Church.

"The first thing towards the trial was to hear them prophesy before myself; and so I did. The Lord, in His providence (I cannot remember the particulars, nor do I charge my memory with them), the Lord, in His providence, gave me ample opportunities in private prayer-meetings (of which there were many in the congregation for this purpose established) of hearing the speaking with tongues and prophesying; and it was so ordered by Providence that every person whom I heard was known to myself, so that I had the double test,—first, of private walk and conversation, and secondly, of hearing the things prophesied. . . . I had, then, first, the blameless walk and conversation of persons in full communion with the Church of Christ; and I had, next, privately hearing the utterances, in which I could detect nothing that was contrary to sound doctrine, but saw everything to be for edification, exhortation, and comfort; and beyond these there are no outward or visible signs to which it can be brought.

"Having these before me, I was still very much afraid of introducing it to the church, and it burdened my conscience I should suppose for some weeks. For look you at the condition in which I was placed. I had sat at the head of the church praying that these gifts might be poured out in the church; I believed in the Lord's faithfulness, that I was praying the prayer of faith, and that He had poured out the gifts on the Church in answer to our prayers. Was I to disbelieve that which in faith I had been praying for, and which we had all been praying for? When it comes, He gives me every opportunity of proving it. I put it to the proof, according to His own Word; and I find, so far as I am able to discern honestly before God, that it is the thing written of in the Scriptures, and unto the faith of which we were baptized."

Such was the process going on in the mind of Irving during this interesting and exciting period.

Reasoning thus he proceeded, as he has described, to "try the spirits." The gifted persons were all known to himself: they were, to the acknowledgment of all, both believers and unbelievers, individuals of blameless life and saintly character. Among them were men who, since then, have preserved the confidence and respect of their community for an entire lifetime; and gentle and pious women, against whom it does not appear that even accusations of vanity or self-importance could be brought. Always with that prepossession in his mind, that these gifts were directly sent in answer to prayer, always with that trust in everybody round him which was his nature, and that unconscious *glamour* in his eyes, that elevated everything they lighted on, Irving went on to examine, and try, and prove the new marvel. His was not a mind judicial, impartial, able to confine itself to mere evidence: had it even been so, the result might still have been the same, since the evidence which

was of overwhelming force with him, was of a kind totally beyond the range of ordinary human testimony. Of all men in the world, perhaps this man, with his inalienable poetic privilege of conferring dignity and grandeur upon everything which interested him deeply, with his perfect trust in other men, and tender sympathy with all genuine emotion, was least qualified to institute the searching and severe investigation which the case demanded; and when it is remembered how forlorn he stood—in the Church, but scarcely of it; deprived of the support, for which his spirit longed; his heart aching with pangs of disappointment and indignation to see that which he held for the divinest of truths everywhere denied and rejected—the disabilities of nature grow strong with every additional touch of circumstance. I cannot pretend to believe that he was capable of taking the calm position of a judge at this deeply important crisis: but I do not doubt for a moment that he entirely believed in his own impartiality, and made, notwithstanding his prepossession, the most conscientious balance of fact and argument; and it is evident that he proceeded with a care and caution scarcely to be expected from him. For weeks he hesitated to suffer the utterances in his church, even in the morning meetings, where the audience were those who had joined with him in supplication for this very gift. And it is not till the end of October that he bursts forth into the following triumphant thanksgiving, conveyed in a letter—or rather in what seems to have been the outer enclosure of a letter, doubtless from his wife or her sister to the anxious household at home—to Dr Martin:—

"26th October, 1831.

"My dear Father,—Thanks should be returned in all the churches for the work which the Lord has done and is doing amongst us. He has raised up the order of prophets amongst us, who, being filled with the Holy Ghost, do speak with tongues and prophesy. I have no doubt of this; and I believe that if the ministers of the Church will be faithful to preach the truth, as the Lord hath enabled me to be, God will seal it in like manner with the baptism of the Holy Ghost. 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?' is a question which may be put to every Church in Christendom; and for every Church may be answered as the Ephesians answered Paul, Acts xix. I desire you to rejoice exceedingly, although it may be the means, if God prevent not, of creating great confusion in the bosom of my dear flock. For as prophesying is for the edifying of the Church, the Holy Ghost will require that His voice shall be heard when 'the brethren are come together into one place;' and this, I fear, will not be endured by many. But the Lord's will be done. I must forsake all for Him. I live by faith daily, for I daily look for His appearing. . . . Farewell!

"Your dutiful and affectionate son,

"Edwd Irving."

This affecting and solemn, yet exultant statement, proves how truly Irving foresaw all that was before him. Up to this time, all external assaults had been softened to him by the warm and close circle of friends who stood up around to assure him of constant sympathy and unfailing support. The unanimous and spontaneous declaration by which his Session expressed their perfect concurrence in his views, which he had published with affectionate pride in the *Morning Watch*, and of which he declares that he "had no hand whatever in originating, nor yet in penning this document, which came forth spontaneously from the hearts and minds of those honest and honourable men whose names it bears," is dated only in December of the previous year. He describes his supporters in March, 1831, as "those who have, with one only exception, been with me from the beginning; who for many years have, publicly and privately, had every opportunity of knowing my doctrine thoroughly." They were all dear to him for many a good work done together, and sorrowful hour shared side by side; some of them were his "spiritual sons;" some his close and dear companions. He foresaw, looking steadfastly forward into that gloom which he was about to enter, that now, at last, this bond of loyal love was to be broken, this last guard dispersed from about his heart. He saw it with anguish and prophetic desolation, his last link to the old world of hereditary faith and dutiful affection. But though his heart broke, he could not choose. The warning and reproving voices which interrupted his prayers and exhortations in private meetings, had by this time risen to their full mastery over the heart which, entirely believing that they came from God, had no choice left but to obey them. Those prophets told him, in mournful outbursts, that he was restraining the Spirit of God. It was a reproach not to be borne by one who held his God in such true, filial, personal love as few can realize, much less experience. Touched by the thought of that terrible possibility, he removed the first barriers.

"Next morning," he says, "I went to the church, and after praying, I rose up and said in the midst of them all, 'I cannot be a party in hindering that which I believe to be the voice of the Holy Ghost from being heard in the church. I feel that I have too long deferred, and I now pray you to give audience while I read out of the Scriptures, as my authority, the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning the prophets. I then read these passages, 1 Cor. xiv. 23. . . . . Therefore, reading these two passages in the hearing of the people, I said, 'Now I stand here before you (it was at our morning meeting, and after my conscience had been burdened with it for some weeks), and I cannot

longer forbid, but do, on the other hand, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, permit, at this meeting of the Church, that every one who has received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and is moved by the Holy Ghost, shall have liberty to speak,' and I pointed to those whom I had heard in private. It pleased the Lord, at that very meeting, to sanction it by His approval. . . . . Now, observe, I took to myself, according to the commandment of Jesus, the privilege and responsibility of trying the prophets in private, before permitting them to speak in the Church. I then gave the Church an opportunity of fulfilling its duty; for beyond question, it belongeth to every man to try the spirits; it belongeth not to the pastor alone, it belongeth to every man to do it. . . . . It was my duty, therefore, in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, who ruleth over all Churches, and without which a Church is nothing but a synagogue of Satan; it belonged to me, as the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, having tried them, to put them forth to the people, that they might be tried by them. I put them forth at the morning exercise of the Church; and I did, from the pulpit, make known to the people, in prayer and in preaching, and in all ways, and invited the people to come and to witness for themselves."

This process of "probation," as the preacher, with solemn stateliness, names the second interval, lasted for several weeks. It is not difficult to imagine what during this time must have been the state of the agitated congregation, in which, already, all the dreaded symptoms of resistance and separation were becoming visible. Aware, as entire London was shortly aware, of those extraordinary manifestations, the sober Scotch remnant looked on severely, with suspicion and fear; anxious, above all things, to escape the probation thus placed in their power, and to ignore, as far as possible, the existence of the new influence which they felt they could see and hear only to condemn. Still steady and faithful adherents of Irving, and numbering among them all the oldest and most influential members of the congregation, they were prepared, for love of their leader, to wink at almost anything which was not authoritatively set before their eyes, and with troubled hearts, as men hear news from an enemy's camp in which are some of their dearest friends, they listened anxiously to the reports of what was done and said at those romantic matin services, in the mornings which began again to darken into autumn. The air was rife with tales of prophecy and miracle. The very newspapers were discussing those wonders, which could not be contradicted, however they might be accounted for. And the vaguer excitement outside rose into a climax within that church in Regent Square, where now, Sunday after Sunday, the preacher invited his alarmed or curious hearers to satisfy themselves, to prove the gifts, to make sure, each on his own account, what the new revelation

was; and where, morning after morning, in the chill day-break, these astonishing voices and strange bursts of utterance found expression. A shudder of expectation, a rising stir of alarm, of indignation, of resistance—mingled with remorseful love towards the devoted man who thus risked his last human stronghold at the bidding of what he supposed to be the voice of God, and perhaps with a suspicious jealousy of those "gifted persons" who were almost without exception new comers, attracted to the National Scotch Church neither for its nationality nor its Presbyterianism, but simply for Irving's sake—ran trembling through the little community. It was clear to the dullest eye that matters could not stand still where they were. They waited, perplexed, disapproving, and afraid, for what was next to come; shaken in their allegiance, if never in their affection.

Early in November (there is some confusion about the exact date), matters came to a crisis.

"I went to church," writes a Mr Pilkington*—who, for a short time, professed to be gifted in his own person, and afterwards changed his opinion, and did what he could to "expose" the mysteries in which he had not been able to take a part—"and was, as usual, much gratified and comforted by Mr Irving's lectures and prayers; but I was very unexpectedly interrupted by the well-known voice of one of the sisters, who, finding she was unable to restrain herself, and respecting the regulation of the Church, rushed into the vestry, and gave vent to utterance; whilst another, as I understood, from the same impulse, ran down the side aisle, and out of the church, through the principal door. The sudden, doleful, and unintelligible sounds, being heard by all the congregation, produced the utmost confusion; the act of standing up, the exertion to hear, see, and understand, by each and every one of perhaps 1500 or 2000 persons, created a noise which may be easily conceived. Mr Irving begged for attention, and when order was restored, he explained the occurrence, which he said was not new, except in the congregation, where he had been for some time considering the propriety of introducing it; but though satisfied of the correctness of such a measure, he was afraid of dispersing the flock; nevertheless, as it was now brought forward by God's will, he felt it his duty to submit. He

* The statements of this gentleman, and another still more important deserter from the prophetical ranks, Mr Baxter of Doncaster, are extremely interesting—that of the latter, in particular, called *A Narrative of Facts*, and intended to prove that the whole matter was a delusion, is in reality by far the strongest evidence in favour of the truth and genuine character of these spiritual manifestations which I have met with. After reading such a narrative, it is impossible to dream of trickery, and very difficult to believe in mere delusion; although the sole object of the writer, in the extraordinary and touching tale, is to show that he had deceived himself, and was no prophet.

then said he would change the discourse intended for the day, and expound the 14th chapter of Corinthians, in order to elucidate what had just happened. The sister was now returning from the vestry to her seat, and Mr Irving, observing her from the pulpit, said, in an affectionate tone, 'Console yourself, sister! console yourself!' He then proceeded with his discourse."

After this, the congregation separated, full of excitement, as was natural. And the one notable figure which appears in the midst of that confused and agitated assembly, withdrew to domestic quiet, to prayer or visitation of the sick, according to the previously recorded habits of his simple and spotless life. While the November day darkened over him in those prayers and meditations through which thrilled hopes of immediate communication with heaven almost too much for the human heart, which, all aflame with love and genius as it was, was not the heart of an ecstatic, the rumour of this new thing ran through the wondering world around him. In the evening an excited and almost riotous crowd rushed into the church where such an astonishing novelty and sensation was in their power. The tumultuous scene which followed is thus described by Mrs Hamilton:—

"In the evening there was a tremendous crowd. The galleries were fearfully full; and from the commencement of the service there was an evident uproariousness, considering the place, about the doors, men's voices continually mingling with the singing and the praying in most indecent confusion. Mr Irving had nearly finished his discourse, when another of the ladies spoke. The people heard for a few minutes with quietness comparatively. But on a sudden, a number of the fellows in the gallery began to hiss, and then some cried 'Silence!' and some one thing, and some another, until the congregation, except such as had firm faith in God, were in a state of extreme commotion. Some of these fellows (who, from putting all the circumstances together, it afterwards appeared were a gang of pickpockets come to make a *row*) shut the gallery doors, which I think was providential—for had any one rushed and fallen, many lives might have been lost, the crowd was so great. The awful scene of Kirkcaldy church * was before my eyes, and I dare say before Mr Irving's. He immediately rose and said, 'Let us pray,' which he did, using chiefly the words, 'Oh, Lord, still the tumult of the people,' over and over again in an unfaltering voice. This kept those in the pews in peace, none attempted to move, and certainly the Lord did still the people. We then sang, and before pronouncing the blessing, Mr Irving intimated that henceforward there would be morning service on the Sunday, when those persons would exercise their gifts, for that he would not subject the congregation to a repetition of the scene they had witnessed. He said he had been afraid of life, and that which was so pre-

* The falling of the gallery there in consequence of the extreme crowd to hear Irving in June, 1828.

cious he would not again risk, and more to a like effect. A party still attempted to keep possession of the church. One man close to me attempted to speak. Some called, 'Hear! hear!' others, 'Down! down!' The whole scene reminded one of Paul at Ephesus. It was very difficult to get the people to go; but by God's blessing it was accomplished. The Lord be praised! We were in peril, great peril. But not a hair of the head of any one suffered."

The following version of the same occurrence, describing it from an outside and entirely different point of view, appears in the *Times* of the 19th November, extracted from the *World*. It is headed "Disturbance at the National Scotch Church," and is curious as showing the state of contemporary feeling out of doors:—

"On Sunday, the Rev. Edward Irving delivered two sermons on the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, on each of which occasions the congregation was disturbed by individuals pretending to the miraculous gift of tongues. During the sermon in the morning, a lady (a Miss Hall) thus singularly endowed was compelled to retire into the vestry, where she was unable, as she herself says, to restrain herself, and spoke for some time in the unknown tongue to the great surprise of the congregation, who did not seem prepared for the exhibition. The reverend gentleman resumed the subject in the evening, by discoursing from, or rather expounding, the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians. Towards the conclusion of the exposition, he took occasion to allude to the circumstance of the morning, and expressed his doubts whether he had done right in restraining the exercise of the gift in the church itself, and compelling the lady to retire to the vestry. At this moment, a gentleman in the gallery, a Mr Taplin, who keeps an academy in Castle Street, Holborn, rose from his seat, and commenced a violent harangue in the unknown tongue. The confusion occasioned was extreme. The whole congregation rose from their seats in affright, several ladies screamed aloud, and others rushed to the doors. Some supposed that the building was in danger, and that there had either been a murder or an attempt to murder some person in the gallery; insomuch that one gentleman actually called out to the pew-openers and beadle to stop him, and not to let him escape. On both occasions the church was extremely crowded, particularly in the evening, and it would be impossible to describe the confusion produced by this display of fanaticism. There was, indeed, in the strange unearthly sound and extraordinary power of voice, enough to appal the heart of the most stout-hearted. A great part of the congregation standing upon the seats to ascertain the cause of the alarm, while the reverend gentleman, standing with arms extended, and occasionally beckoning them to silence, formed a scene which partook as much of the ridiculous as the sublime. No attempt was made to stop the individual, and after two or three minutes he became exhausted, and sat down, and then the reverend gentleman concluded the service. Many were so alarmed, and others so disgusted, that they did not return again into the church, and discussed the propriety of the reverend gentleman suf-

fering the exhibition; and altogether a sensation was produced which will not be soon forgotten by those who were present."

In a letter to Mr Macdonald, Irving himself gives an account of a very similar scene. There is, however, great confusion of dates; some of the witnesses identify the decisive day as the 16th, some as the 30th of October, while Mrs Hamilton's letter fixes it as the 13th of November. The precise day, however, is unimportant; many such scenes of agitation and tumult must have disturbed the church. In the general features of the prevailing excitement all the accounts concur. Irving's own record is as follows:—

"London, 7th November, 1831.

"My dear Friend,—May the Lord keep you in a continual nearness to Him, going forward and not going backward. For it is a sore and a sifting time wherein there is no safety, but will be destruction to every one who is not abiding in Christ and in Him only. Yesterday was our communion, and the Lord gave me great increase to my church, nearly a hundred during the half year; but some have drawn back, offended in the word of the Spirit in the mouth of the prophets, which, in obedience to the Lord's commandment, I have permitted, 'when the Church is gathered together into one place,' on all occasions. Now, it is remarked that in all instances the Spirit hath permitted the service to be concluded, and the blessing pronounced, before the manifestation. And it hath always been a witness of the Holy Ghost with us, the ministers. Last night David Brown preached a mighty sermon on the 91st Psalm, bearing much allusion to the cholera; and twice over did the Spirit speak forth, once in confirmation, generally, that it was the judgment of God, once, in particular, to the scoffers. I was seated in the great chair, and was enabled by my single voice to preserve order among, I dare say, 3000 people, and to exhort them, as Peter did at Pentecost, and commend them to the Lord. And they all parted in peace. Most of the Session dislike all this; and had I not been firm and resolved to go out myself sooner, the voice of the Holy Ghost would, ere this, have been put down by one means or another. In two instances the Spirit hath confirmed the Word when I was expounding the Scriptures. Our morning worship is attended by nearly 1000 persons, and the order of it is beautiful. I seek the blessing of God, then we sing. Mr Brown or I read a chapter, and the Spirit confirms our interpretations, or adds and exhorts in few words, without interruption, but with great strengthening; then one of us, or the elders, or the brethren, prays, and then I fulfil the part of the pastor or angel of the church with short instructions, waiting at the intervals for the Spirit to speak, which He does sometimes by one, sometimes by two, and sometimes by three,—which I apply, and break down, and make the best use of for edifying of the flock and convincing the gainsayers; with short prayers as occasion serveth; and I conclude with prayer, and with the doxology, and the blessing. Every Wednesday night I am preaching to thousands 'the Baptism with the

Holy Ghost,' and the Lord is mightily with us. But many adversaries. Oh, pray diligently that Satan may not be able to put this light out! . . . Farewell! May the Lord have you in His holy keeping!

"Your faithful friend and brother,

"EDWD IRVING.

"The Cairds are now with us again."

The singular fact herein recorded of an attendance of a thousand people at the morning service, is perhaps almost as wonderful as any other particular of this exciting time. A concourse of a thousand people, drawn together at half-past six, in those black, wintry mornings, with the November fogs rolling up from the unseen river and murky heart of the city—and day but faintly breaking through the yellow, suffocating vapours when the assembly dispersed—is a prodigy such as perhaps London never saw before, nor is likely to see again. "The Cairds" mentioned in the postscript of this letter were Mary Campbell, the earliest gifted and miraculously healed, and her husband, now apparently wandering from house to house, and church to church, to enlighten the minds or satisfy the curiosity, as the case might be, of those who were chiefly interested in the new dispensation.

This irrevocable step having been taken into the new world—confused, gloomy, and tumultuous, yet radiated with momentary and oft-recurring lights, almost too brilliant and rapturous for the health and reason of a wholesome human creature—which now lay before Irving, it is perhaps necessary to describe, so far as that is practicable to a generation which has forgotten them, what those unknown tongues were which disturbed the composure of the world thirty years ago. The newspaper report quoted above would lead the reader to imagine that the unknown tongue alone was the sum of the utterances given on the occasion referred to in the National Scotch Church. This, however, is proved not to have been the case, by Irving's own declaration that so long as the tongue was unaccompanied by intelligible speech, he "suffered it not in the Church, acting according to the canon of the Apostle; and even in private, in my own presence, I permitted it not." The actual utterances, as they were thus introduced in the full congregation, were short exhortations, warnings, or commands, in English, preceded by some sentences or exclamations in the *tongue*, which was not the primary message, being unintelligible, but only the sign of inspiration—so that a "violent harangue in the tongue" was an untrue and ridiculous statement. The tongue itself was supposed by Mary Campbell, who was the first to exercise it, and apparently by all who believed in the reality of the gift at

that time, to be in truth a language which, under similar circumstances to those which proved at once the miraculous use of the tongues given at Pentecost, would have been similarly recognized. Mary Campbell herself expressed her conviction that the tongue given to her was that of the Pelew Islands, which, indeed, was a safe statement, and little likely to be authoritatively disputed: while some other conjectures pointed to the Turkish and Chinese languages as those thus miraculously bestowed. Since then opinion seems to have changed, even among devout believers in these wonderful phenomena; the hypothesis of actual languages conferred seems to have given way to that of a supernatural sign and attestation of the intelligible prophecy, which, indeed, the Pentecostal experience apart, might very well be argued from St Paul's remarks upon this primitive gift. The character of the sound itself has perhaps received as many different descriptions as there are persons who have heard it. To some, the ecstatic exclamations, with their rolling syllables and mighty voice, were imposing and awful; to others it was merely gibberish shouted from stentorian lungs; to others an uneasy wonder, which it was a relief to find passing into English, even though the height and strain of sound was undiminished. One witness speaks of it as "bursting forth," and that from the lips of a woman, "with an astonishing and terrible crash;" another (Mr Baxter), in his singular narrative, describes how, when "the power" fell suddenly upon himself, then all alone at his devotions, "the utterance was so loud that I put my handkerchief to my mouth to stop the sound, that I might not alarm the house;" while Irving himself describes it with all his usual splendour of diction as follows:—

"The whole utterance, from the beginning to the ending of it, is with a power, and strength, and fulness, and sometimes rapidity of voice, altogether different from that of the person's ordinary utterance in any mood; and I would say, both in its form and in its effects upon a simple mind, quite supernatural. There is a power in the voice to thrill the heart and overawe the spirit after a manner which I have never felt. There is a march, and a majesty, and a sustained grandeur in the voice, especially of those who prophesy, which I have never heard even a resemblance to, except now and then in the sublimest and most impassioned moods of Mrs Siddons and Miss O'Neil. It is a mere abandonment of all truth to call it screaming or crying; it is the most majestic and divine utterance which I have ever heard, some parts of which I never heard equalled, and no part of it surpassed, by the finest execution of genius and art exhibited at the oratorios in the concerts of ancient music. And when the speech utters itself in the way of a psalm or spiritual song, it is the likest to some of the most simple and ancient chants in the cathedral service, insomuch that I have been often led to

think that those chants, of which some can be traced up as high as the days of Ambrose, are recollections and transmissions of the inspired utterances in the primitive Church. Most frequently the silence is broken by utterance in a tongue, and this continues for a longer or a shorter period, sometimes occupying only a few words, as it were filling the first gust of sound; sometimes extending to five minutes, or even more, of earnest and deeply-felt discourse, with which the heart and soul of the speaker is manifestly much moved to tears, and sighs, and unutterable groanings, to joy, and mirth, and exultation, and even laughter of the heart. So far from being unmeaning gibberish, as the thoughtless and heedless sons of Belial have said, it is regularly-formed, well-proportioned, deeply-felt discourse, which evidently wanteth *only the ear of him whose native tongue it is,* to make it a very masterpiece of powerful speech."

This lofty representation, if too elevated to express the popular opinion, is yet confirmed by the mass of testimony which represents the *Tongue* as something awful and impressive. The utterances in English are within the range of a less elevated faith, being at least comprehensible, and open to the test of internal evidence. I quote several of these manifestations in the after-part of this history, for the satisfaction of my readers. To my own mind they contain no evidence of supernatural, and specially of divine origin. That the effect of their passionate cadences and wild rapture of prophetical repetition may have been overwhelming, I do not doubt; and most of the speakers seem to have been entirely above suspicion; but the thought that "there needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us *this*," much less a new and special revelation from heaven, will recur infallibly in face of these utterances. I can neither explain nor account for phenomena so extraordinary; and, fortunately, am not called upon to do either. The fact and fashion of their existence, and the wonderful influence they exercised over the subject of this history, are all I have to do with. The reader will find in the remarkable narrative, intended by Mr Baxter to dissipate the delusion, more subtle and striking evidence of a real *something* in the movement than is given either by the recorded utterances themselves, or any plea for them that I have heard of. And at the same time it is certain that Irving faithfully followed them through every kind of anguish and martyrdom; that by their sole inspiration a body, not inconsiderable either in numbers or influence, has been organized and established in being; and that after a lapse of thirty years, they still continue to regulate the destinies of that oft-disappointed but patient Church.

In that autumnal season of '31, in itself a time of trouble and perplexity, of political agitation at home and apprehensions

abroad, and when the modern plague, cholera, doubly dreaded because unknown, yet not more dreaded than, as the event proved, it deserved to be, trembled over the popular mind and imagination, filling them with all the varieties of real and fanciful terror, the newspapers still found time to enter into this newest wonder. With natural zest they seized again upon the well-known name, so often discussed, which was now placed in a position to call forth any amount of criticism and ridicule. Very shortly after the introduction of the "prophesying" into the Sunday meetings of the church in Regent Square, the *Times* put forth very intelligible hints that the church, though built for the Rev. Edward Irving, was only his so long as he conformed himself to the laws of the Church of Scotland; showing an interest in the cause of orthodoxy, and Scotch orthodoxy to boot, somewhat rare with that cosmopolitan journal. "The great body of Mr Irving's adherents would probably have remained by him if, in his headlong course of enthusiasm, he could have found a resting-place. They might pardon his nonsense about the time and circumstances of the millennium. They might smile at unintelligible disquisitions about 'heads' and 'horns,' and 'trumpets,' and 'candlesticks,' and 'white and black horses,' in Revelations. These things might offend the judgment, but did not affect the nerves. But have we the same excuse for the recent exhibitions with which the metropolis has been scandalized?" says the virtuous *Times*. "Are we to listen to the screaming of hysterical women, and the ravings of frantic men? Is bawling to be added to absurdity, and the disturber of a congregation to escape the police and treadmill, because the person who occupies the pulpit vouches for his inspiration?" Much virtuous indignation, indeed, was expended on all sides on this fertile and inviting subject. The *Record* takes up the story where the *Times* leaves it, and narrates the drama of the second Sunday. Never was congregation of Scotch Presbyterians, lost in the mass of a vast community, which never more than half comprehends, and is seldom more than half respectful of Presbyterianism, so followed by the observation of the world, so watched and noted. In the mean time, the mystic world within concentrated more and more around the only man who was to bear the brunt, he whom the outside world accused of endless vagaries, whom his very friends declared to be seeking notoriety at any cost, and from whose side already the companions of his life were dropping off in sad but inevitable estrangement; yet who stood in that mystic circle, in the depths of his noble simplicity and humbleness, the one predestined martyr who was to die for

the reality of gifts which he did not share. With criticisms and censures of every kind going on around, he proceeded, rapt in the fervour of his faith, deeper and deeper into the spiritual mystery which he believed and hoped was now to dawn splendidly upon the unbelieving world, awakening everywhere, amid material darkness, that sacred sense of the unseen and the Divine which had always existed in his own lofty spirit, and over the failure and lack of which he had sighed so deeply and so long in vain.

The current, when it had once broken forth, was much too strong to be checked. The tumult and commotion of the evening service described by Mrs Hamilton, had drawn from Irving's lips a hasty undertaking not to expose his congregation again to the danger and profanation of such scenes. Before the next Sunday, however, he had risen above such considerations. Daily stimulated, warned, and reproved by the prophets who surrounded him, he gradually gave up his lingering tenderness of reluctance to disperse his people, and even sacrificed his devout regard (always so strong in him—the reverence more of a High Anglican than an iconoclastic Presbyterian) for the sanctities of the house of God. Indeed, believing fervently, as he did, that these utterances were the voice of God, one does not see how he could have done otherwise. The *Record* relates, on the 21st November, its great surprise to hear that after "the positive declaration of the Rev. Edward Irving to his church and congregation, on the 13th instant, that he should forbid for the future the exercise of the unknown tongues during the usual Sabbath services, Mr Irving stated yesterday morning that he committed an error by so doing. He stated that if it pleased the Lord to speak by His messengers, he begged them to listen with devout attention. In a few seconds a female (we believe Miss Cardale) commenced in the unknown tongue, and then passed into the known tongue. She said: 'He shall reveal it! He shall reveal it! Yea, heed it! yea, heed it! Ye are yet in the wilderness. Despise not his word! despise not his word! Not one jot or tittle shall pass away.' The minister then rose and called upon the church to bless the Lord for His voice, which they had just heard in the midst of the congregation."

Notwithstanding the surprise of the *Record*, it is very apparent that, having entered upon this course, it was simply impossible to pause or draw back. Had any dishonesty or timidity existed in Irving's breast, he might, indeed, as men of irresolute tempers or uncertain belief will, have so far smothered his own convictions as to refuse his consent to the prophetic

utterances. But with that entire faith he had, what was the servant of God to do? It was not denying a privilege even to the "gifted persons." It was silencing the voice of God. Yet even those who knew him best vexed his troubled soul with entreaties that he would put up again this impossible barrier, and debar, according to his own belief, the Holy Spirit, the Great Teacher, from utterance in the church. While the newspapers without denounced the "exhibitions," and wondered how he could permit them, tender domestic appeals were at the same time being made to him, to pause upon that road which evidently led to temporal loss and overthrow, and must make a cruel separation between his future and his past. The judicious William Hamilton, his brother and friend, and perpetual referee, retires with a grieved heart into the country; and, consulting privately with Dr Martin, describes his own uncertainty and desire to wait longer before either permitting or debarring the new utterances; his conviction that all the speakers are "very holy and exemplary persons;" the general anxiety and desire of the congregation to "wait patiently and see more distinctly the hand of God in the matter;" and at the same time the inclination of "some of the trustees to enforce the discipline of the Church of Scotland, according to the provisions of the trust deed." "Mr Irving is fully persuaded and hesitates not to declare, that it is the Holy Ghost speaking in the members of Christ, as on the day of Pentecost," writes this anxious and loving friend. "Edward is most conscientious and sincere in the matter; and he is so thoroughly convinced in his own mind that it is impossible to make an impression upon him, or to induce that caution which the circumstances seem so imperatively to demand." When fortified with the advice and arguments of Dr Martin, who was under no such trembling anxiety as that which influenced his son-in-law, Mr Hamilton proceeds to reason with his "dear brother and pastor" in a sensible and affectionate letter, dated from Tunbridge Wells, the 26th November, but is anticipated by a letter from Irving, in which already appears the first cloud of that coming storm which his kind and anxious relative was so desirous to arrest:—

"London, 21st November, 1831.

"My dear Brother and Sister,—I pray that the Lord may preserve you in His truth and keep you from all backsliding, for he that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom of heaven. Draw not back, neither stand still, I beseech you, for your soul's salvation. Remember the exhortations of the Lord and His apostles to this effect: save your own souls, I beseech you. The trus

tees met, and I explained to them that I could not in this matter take any half measures, but would be faithful to God and His Word, and would immediately proceed to set the ordinance of prophesying in order, in the meetings of the church; and because I see prophesying with tongues is as much for the assembling and snaring of the hypocrite (Isa. xxviii. 13, 14) as for the refreshing of the saints, I was resolved that whatever class of people might come to the church at any meeting, I would not prevent the Lord from speaking then and there what it pleased Him to speak; and I pointed their attention to that part of the trust-deed which gave into my hand the regulation of everything connected with the public worship of God in the house over which they were the trustees. And after a good deal of conversation, conducted in a very friendly, and I hope, Christian spirit, I came away and left them to deliberate. They adjourned the meeting till Tuesday night, when I do not intend to be present; but through Mr Virtue have intimated that if they should think of taking any step, they would previously appoint a conference with me, and one or two who think with me, that if possible we might adjust the matter without a litigation; and if it be necessary, that it may be gone into with a simple desire of ascertaining the question whether, in anything I have done, I have violated the trust-deed. Perhaps I may write this by letter to them; I shall think of it.

"Yesterday we had peace and much edification. I began by reading passages in 1 Cor. xiv., and then ordering it so, that after the chapter and the sermon there should be a pause, to hear whether the Holy Spirit was minded to speak to us. He spake by Miss E. Cardale after the chapter (John xvi.), exhorting us to ask, for we were still in the wilderness, and needed the waters of the Holy Spirit, identifying the river from the rock with the Holy Ghost. It was very solemn, and all was still attention. While singing the Psalm after, Mr Horn came up to the pulpit with a Bible in his hand, and asked me permission to read out of the Scriptures his reason for leaving the church and never entering it more! This I refused, and he went into the vestry, took his hat, and went right down the church. Oh, what a fearful thing! Dear brother, I beseech you to be guarded against the workings of the flesh. Mr Mackenzie was the only elder left; but the Lord was with us. This morning a man came to us who was delivered under the sermon from his sins. In the afternoon service, which I took, the Spirit sealed with His witness both the exposition (Mal. iii.) and the sermon (John vii. 37—39). In the evening, when the church was altogether filled, we locked the doors and kept them locked. The people beat upon them, but I commanded them to be kept shut, resolved to take the responsibility on myself, and I preached with much of the power and presence of God (exposition, Mark xiii.; sermon, Isa. xxviii. 9—14); and after all was over, I explained to them that though I had kept my pledge that night, I now solemnly withdrew it, and would permit the Spirit to speak at all times, waiting always at the end of the exposition and the sermon. And if I perish, my dear brother and sister, I perish. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his. . . . . Oh, my dear, my very dear friends and brethren, wait upon your Father, and keep close to Him in such a time as this! My love to you would not suffer

me to be silent, though I have much to do. God have you ever in His holy keeping!

"Your faithful brother,
"EDWD IRVING."

So with pathetic solemnity he communicates his final decision to those anxious spectators, who yet cannot choose but interpose and ply him once and again with clear and sober arguments—partly supplied by the distant Scotch divine in Kirkcaldy Manse, who is more absolute and assured in his reasoning, and half disposed to be impatient of Edward's credulity—and partly by the unconvinced yet sympathetic soul of the affectionate brother, who cannot condemn the faith which he sees to be so firm and deeply-rooted. There is something profoundly touching in the situation altogether; the anxious private correspondence of the disturbed relatives—their fears for Edward's position and influence—the troubled laying of their sagacious heads together to make out what arguments will be most likely to affect him, and how he can best be persuaded or convinced for his own good; and altogether ignorant of that affectionate conspiracy, the unconvincible heroic soul, without a doubt or possibility of scepticism; no debateable ground in his mind, on which reasoning and argument can plant their lever; full of a glorious certainty that God has stooped from heaven to send communications to his adoring ear, and ready to undergo the loss of all things, even love, for that wonderful grace and privilege. For some time longer these two Hamiltons, his "dear brother and sister," follow him, doubtfully and sadly, with regrets and tears; but nothing is to be done by all their tender arguments and appeals; "Edward is so thoroughly convinced in his own mind, that it is impossible to make any impression upon him." They try their best, and fail; they drop off after a while, like the rest, with hearts half broken. Months after, when William Hamilton reappears among the mournful handful in Regent Square, which Irving has left behind him, it is said among his friends that he looks ten years older. Comprehension and agreement may fail, but nothing can withdraw this brother Edward from any heart that has ever loved or known him—for the two words mean the same thing, as far as he is concerned.

The very next day after the above letter was written, Irving addressed another to the trustees, setting forth fully the order of worship which he intended henceforward to adopt in the church:—

"November 22nd, 1831.

"My dear Friends,—I think it to be my duty to inform you exactly concerning the order which I have established in the public worship of the church for taking in the ordinance of prophesying, which it hath pleased the Lord, in answer to our prayers, to bestow upon us. The Apostle Paul, in the 14th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, hath ordered, in the name and by the commandment (verse 37) of the Lord Jesus, that the prophets shall speak when the whole Church is gathered together into one place, 'two or three' (verse 23), and hath permitted that all the prophets may prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted (verses 29—31); and he hath given instructions concerning the comely manner in which women shall prophesy in chapter eleven of the same Epistle. Walking by this rule, I have appointed, for the present, that, immediately after the reading and exposition of the Scriptures by the minister, there shall be a pause for the witness of the Holy Ghost by the mouth of those to whom He hath been given (Acts v. 32), and the same have I appointed to be done after the sermon. And this I intend shall have place at all the public congregations of the church, because I believe it to be according to the commandment of the blessed Lord by the mouth of the Apostle, and according to the practice of the Church, so long as she had prophets speaking by the Holy Ghost in the midst of her.

"The Church of Scotland, at the time of the Reformation, turned her attention reverently to this standing order of the Church of Christ, and appointed a weekly exercise for prophesying or interpreting of the Scriptures (First Book of Discipline, chapter xii.), expressly founded on and ordered by the 14th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, 'to the end that the Kirk may judge whether they be able to serve to God's glory and to the profit of the Kirk in the vocation of the ministry or not.' At that time they had adopted the prevalent but erroneous notion that the office of the apostle, of the evangelist, and of the prophet, are not perpetual; and now 'have ceased in the Kirk of God, except when it pleased God extraordinarily for a time to stir some of them up again' (Second Book of Discipline, chapter ii.). God hath now proved that He both can and will raise up these offices again, having anointed many, both amongst us and elsewhere, with the gift of prophesying after the manner foretold in Isaiah xxviii. 11, fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and particularly ordered in 1 Cor. xi. and xiv. These persons, having been fully proved at our daily morning exercise, and found to speak by the Spirit of God, I have, in obedience to the Apostle, and in the spirit of the Church of Scotland, permitted to exercise their gift in the congregation, according to the order laid down above.

"Now, my dear brethren, it is well known to you that by the Word of God, and by the rules of all well-ordered churches, and by the trust-deed of our church in particular, it lies with the angel or minister of the church to order in all things connected with the public worship and service of God. For this duty I am responsible to the Great Head of the Church, and have felt the burden of it upon my conscience for many weeks past; but consulting for the feelings of others, I have held back from doing that which I felt to be my duty, and most profitable for the great edification of the Church of Christ, over which the Lord hath set

me. I desire to humble myself in His sight for having too long lingered to walk in the way of His express commandment; and having at last obeyed Him to whom we must all answer at the great day, I beseech you, dearly beloved, to strengthen my hands and uphold them, as in times past ye have always been forward to do; but if ye cannot see your way clearly to do this, I entreat you not to let or withstand, lest haply ye be found fighting against God. And the more, as it is expressly written, in the only place where the method of prophesying in another tongue is mentioned, that it should be for a rest and refreshment to some, for a snare and stumbling unto many (Isaiah xxviii. 12, 13). For the rest, dear brethren, I need only add that, if you should see it your duty to take any step toward the prohibition of this (as I have heard that some are minded to do, which may God, for their own sake, prevent, and for the sake of all concerned), I pray that nothing may be done till after a friendly conference between the trustees on the one hand, and myself, your minister, with some friends to assist me, on the other; for as we have hitherto had good Christian fellowship together, we will do our part by all means to preserve it to the end, without compromising our truth and duty. I have done myself the satisfaction of sending to each one of you, dear brethren, a copy of the first part of a treatise on the subject of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost for your further information on this subject, which I beg you will accept as a small token of the esteem and gratitude of your faithful and affectionate friend and minister,

"EDWD IRVING.

"Finally, may the Lord guide you in upright judgment, and preserve you blameless unto the day of His appearing, and then receive you into His glory! Amen, and Amen!"

It was thus, not in anger, but in mutual affection and regret, that the first parallels of this warfare were opened; and strangely enough, of all who argued, remonstrated, or pleaded with Irving, in public or private, his Scotch father-in-law, strong in all ecclesiastical proprieties, as it was natural he should be, and often disposed to be impatient of Edward's faith, seems to have been the only man who recognized and acknowledged that, believing as Irving did, no other course was practicable to him. The suppression of the manifestations in public appears to have been all that the trustees ever wanted; and *that* they hoped their minister might be urged or persuaded into, if they still left him the freedom of his morning services. Dr Martin alone perceived that it was impossible for Irving to shut out, what he took for the voice of God, from any place where he was or had authority.

The treatise upon *Baptism with the Holy Ghost* is one of the brief and few results of his literary labours during this agitating year; this—the tract, published earlier in the year,

on *Christ's Holiness in Flesh*, and the reprint of the *Ancient Confessions of Faith* and *Books of Discipline of the Church of Scotland*, being, with the exception of articles in the *Morning Watch*, his sole publications in 1831. The latter is especially remarkable, as appearing at such a moment. He had apparently cherished the idea for years; but only now, in the midst of his own troubles, grieved to the heart to see his beloved mother-Church falling, as he believed, so far from her ancient height of perfection, he confronts her once more, indignant yet tender, with these, the primitive rules of her faith and practice, in his hand. A rapid historical sketch of primitive Scotch Christianity in its romantic period, the Culdee age of gold, which he evidently intended, had time permitted, to carry out through the less obscure chronicles of the Reformation, occupies the first part of the book. But the real preface, to which attaches all the human and individual interest always conveyed by Irving's prefaces, contains an examination of those ancient documents, in which he—who had already been denounced as a heretic, and who was on the eve of being cast out from his church for departing from the rules of the Church of Scotland—enthusiastically adopts the primary standards of that very Church of Scotland as the confession of his faith, and admiringly sets forth the beauty and perfectness of those entirely national statements of belief. I do not know if Irving was the first to fall back with a sensation of relief and expansion from the cruel logic of the Westminster Confession to the earlier Scottish creed,—the simple, manful, uncontroversial declaration of the faith that was in them, which the first Reformers gave, and which, I believe, many of their present descendants would gladly and thankfully see replaced, instead of the elaborate production of the Westminster Puritans; but it was he who introduced them anew to the notice of his brethren.

"I prefer beyond all measure," says Irving, "the labours of our Reformers, which took so many years to complete them; and grieve exceedingly that they should have been virtually supplanted and buried out of sight by the act of one General Assembly in a factious time convened. . . . While I say I lament this other instance of Scottish haste, I am far from disavowing the Westminster Confession, to which I have set my hand, or even disallowing it as an excellent composition upon the whole. But for many reasons I greatly postpone it to our original standards. . . The truth is that the Church of Scotland was working with head and hand to proselytize or to beat England into the Presbyterian form of Church government, and therefore adopted these books of the English Presbyterians, thinking there could be no unity without uniformity, a cruel mistake, which was woefully retaliated upon them in the reigns of the second Charles and the second James. It is

not with any particular expressions or doctrines of the Westminster Confession that I find fault, but with the general structure of it. It is really an imposition upon a man's conscience to ask him to subscribe such a minute document; it is also a call upon his previous knowledge of ecclesiastical controversy, which very few can honestly answer; and being digested on a systematic principle, it is rather an exact code of doctrine than the declaration of a person's faith in a personal God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I find it to be a great snare to tender consciences—a great trial to honest men—insomuch that, as a pastor, I have often been greatly perplexed to reconcile men, both elders and preachers, to the subscription of it. They seem to feel that it is rather an instrument for catching dishonest, than a rule for guiding honest people; that it presupposeth men knavish, and prepareth gyves upon their legs, and shackles for their hands. . . In one word, there is a great deal too much of it for rightly serving the ends of a confession. . . . There is no use for hard-fasting men at such a rate, although it be very necessary to exhibit a distinct standard of faith for them to rally under."

Throughout the year the *Morning Watch* carried on, without intermission, the two great controversies in which Irving was engaged. Papers on the Humanity of our Lord, which, by over-exposition and explanation, confuse and profane the question, appeared in every number, along with inquiries into the new spiritual gifts, some of which bear the mark of Irving's own hand—and accounts of miraculous cures, so detailed and minute that it is difficult not to think of the parallel cases cited by Professor Holloway and other vendors of miraculous universal medicine. Irving's series upon *Old Testament Prophecies fulfilled in the New*, runs through the entire volume; where, too, there appears now and then a human, personal glimpse of him in the affectionate testimony of a friend; as, for example, when the *Morning Watch*, taking part, for some wonderful occasion, with the *Record*, begs its adherents to support that paper, irrespective of "its conduct on another subject." "We exhort all such to overlook the trespass against a brother, dear as he deservedly is to all who know him," says the prophetical journal, confident that nobody can mistake whom it means, and speaking with a warmth of personal feeling unknown to the abstract dignity of the Press. "There is no breast on earth more ready to pardon than he who has most reason to complain, or who would more regret that personal feelings towards him should impede the promulgation of such sentiments as those of which we have shown the *Record* to be now the advocate." Such a reference to an individual, assumed to be so entirely well-known and held in such affectionate regard by an audience considerable

enough to keep a quarterly review afloat, is, perhaps, unique in literature.

As the days darkened, and the end of the year approached, matters became more and more hopeless in the little world of Regent Square, where still the daily matins gathered crowds of curious worshippers, and where, at almost every service, the voices of the prophets were heard, filling up the pauses which the preacher had appointed for the purpose, and crowding with an excited and miscellaneous auditory the church which was to have been a national rallying point and centre of Christian influence. Such hopes were over now. The inspired circle which surrounded Irving was not of the nation which gave his church its name; those who were of that race were deserting him day by day. It was no longer to a national influence, but to a remnant saved from all nations, a peculiar people, that his earnest eyes were turned. The trustees of the church, to whom he had addressed his letter concerning the new order of worship, continued, while firmly opposed to that novel system, to hope that something might yet be done by reason and argument to change his mind. They met again in December, and had a solemn conference with Irving, who was accompanied by Mr Cardale (a gentleman whose wife and sister were both among the gifted persons) as his legal adviser, and by Mr Mackenzie, the only one of his elders who believed with him. Mr Hamilton reports, for the information of Dr Martin, that "a compromise was attempted by some of the trustees, who strongly urged Edward to prohibit the gifted persons from speaking on the Sabbath, leaving it to him to make such regulations regarding the weekly services as he might think proper." When this proved vain, the trustees, "being exceedingly unwilling, from their great reverence and respect for Edward, to push matters to extremes, resolved again to adjourn, and to leave it to the Session, at their meeting on Monday, to reconsider the subject." "The Session"—the same Session which, not a year ago, came forward spontaneously and as one man to take up their share of their leader's burdens, and declare their perfect concurrence with him—"accordingly entered into a very lengthened discussion, during which quotations were made from the Books of Discipline and the Acts of the Assembly to show the inconsistency of the present proceedings with the discipline of the Church. . . . . An intimation was given, which I was pained at, that an appeal would be made to the Presbytery of London, according to the provision of the trust-deed. This Edward most earnestly deprecated, and begged that he might not be carried before a body who are so inimical to

him." Mr Hamilton proceeds to confide to his father-in-law his own melancholy forebodings for everybody and everything concerned; his fears of Irving's "usefulness as a minister being lamentably curtailed," of the scattering of the congregation, and "ruin" of the church, which had been, from the laying of its earliest stone, an object dear to the heart of the zealous Scotch elder, who now was about to see all his own laborious efforts, and those of his friends, comparatively lost. How such repeated entreaties, urged upon him with real love by his most faithful and familiar friends, must have wrung the heart of Irving, always so open to proofs of affection, may easily be imagined. He stood fast through the whole, a matter more difficult to such a spirit than any strain of resistance to harsher persecutions. The next meeting he does not seem to have attended; but on hearing their decision, wrote to the Session the following letter, full of an almost weeping tenderness, as well as of a resolution which nothing could move :—

"London, December 24, 1831.

"My dear Brethren,—There is nothing which I would not surrender to you, even to my life, except to hinder or retard in any way what I most clearly discern to be the work of God's Holy Spirit, which, with heart and hand, we must all further, as we value the salvation of our immortal souls. I most solemnly warn you all, in the name of the most High God, for no earthly consideration whatever, to gainsay or impede the work of speaking with tongues and prophesying which God had begun amongst us, and which answereth in all respects, both formally and spiritually, to the thing promised in the Scriptures to those who believe; possessed in the primitive Church, and much prayed for by us all. I will do everything I can, dear brethren, to lead you into the truth in this matter; but God alone can give you to discern it, for it is a work of the Spirit, and only spiritually discerned. It cannot but be with great detriment to the church over which we watch, and much grieving to the Spirit of God, that any steps should be taken against it. And I do beseech you, as men for whose souls I watch, not to take any. I cannot find liberty to deviate in anything from the order laid down in my former letter, received by the trustees, the 22nd of November, which is according to the commandments of the Lord, and in nothing contradictory to the constitutions of the Church of Scotland. And to that letter I refer the trustees, as containing the grounds of my proceeding. Farewell! may the Lord have you in His holy keeping and guidance!

"Your affectionate and faithful friend and pastor,

"Edwd Irving."

So the year closed, in perplexity and anxious fear to all those friendly and affectionate opponents whom the heat of conflict had not yet excited into any animosity against himself;

but not in perplexity to Irving, who, secure in his faith, doubted nothing, and was as ready to march to stake or gibbet, had such things been practicable, as any primitive martyr. But sharp to his heart struck those reiterated prayers which he could not grant—those importunities of affectionate unreasonableness, which would neither see this duty as he saw it, nor perceive how impossible it was for him, believing as he did, to restrain or limit the utterances of God. Such a want of perception must have aggravated to an intolerable height the sufferings of his tender heart in this slow and tedious disruption of all its closest ties; but he showed no sign of impatience. He answered them with a pathetic outburst of sorrowful love, "There is nothing which I would not surrender to you, even to my life,"—nothing but the duty he owed to God. In that dreadful alternative, when human friendship and honour stood on one side, and what he believed his true service to his Master on the other, Irving had no possibility of choice. Never man loved love and honour more; but he turned away with steadfast sadness, smiling a smile full of tears and anguish upon those brethren whose affection would still add torture to the pain that was inevitable. He could descend into the darkening world alone, and suffer the loss of almost all that was dear to his heart. He could bear to be shut out from his pulpit, excommunicated by his Church, forsaken of his friends. What he could not do, was to weigh his own comfort, happiness, or life, for a moment, against what he believed to be the will and ordinance of God.

CHAPTER XVII.

1832.

THE next year began with but a gradual increase of darkness to the devoted household, from which old friends were failing and old ties breaking every day. It was no lack of affection which necessitated those partings; but utter disagreement in a point so important, and the growing impatience of the sensible, "practical" men around him for that impracticable faith which no motive of prudence nor weight of reasoning could move, inevitably took the heart from their intercourse, and produced a gradual alienation between Irving and his ancient brethren. Other friends, it is true, came in to take

their place—partisans still more close, loyal, and loving—but they were new, little tried, strangers to all his native sympathies and prejudices, neither Scotch nor Presbyterian : and with equal inevitableness took up an attitude of opposition to the older party, and made the pathetic struggle an internecine war. On all sides the friends of years parted from Irving's side. His wife's relations, with whom he had exchanged so many good offices and tender counsels, were, to a man, against him : so were his elders, with one exception. His friends outside the ecclesiastical boundaries were still less tolerant. Thomas Carlyle and his wife, both much beloved, not only disagreed, but remonstrated ; the former making a vehement protestation against the " Bedlam " and " Chaos " to which his friend's steps were tending, which Irving listened to in silence, covering his face with his hands. When the philosopher had said, doubtless in no measured or lukewarm terms, what he had to say, the mournful apostle lifted his head, and addressed him with all the tenderness of their youth—" Dear friend ! "—that turning of the other cheek seems to have touched the heart of the sage almost too deeply to make him aware what was the defence which the other returned to his fiery words. None of his old supporters, hitherto so devoted and loyal, stood by Irving in this extremity ; nobody except the wife, who shared all his thoughts, and followed him faithfully in faith as well as in love to the margin of the grave.

Very early in this year the little band of " gifted " persons, whose presence had made so much commotion in Regent Square, and of whom we have hitherto had no very clear and recognizable picture, is opened up to us in the narrative, which I have already referred to, of one of the most remarkable among them, Mr Robert Baxter, then of Doncaster. Having but recently appeared within the inspired circle, this gentleman had made his utterrances with so much power and authority, that already adumbrations of an office higher than the prophetic overshadowed him, and he seems to have taken a leading place in all the closest and most sacred conferences of the prophets. He had been for some years known to Irving ; his character for godliness and devotion stood high, and he was so much in the confidence and fellowship of the minister of the church in Regent Square as to have been, before any gifts had manifested themselves in him, permitted occasionally to conduct some part of the service in the morning prayer-meetings. At length he spoke, and that with a force and fulness not yet attained by any of the other speakers. " In the beginning of my utterances that evening," he says in his narrative, " some observations were in

the power addressed by me to the pastor in a commanding tone; and the manner and course of utterance was so far differing from those which had been manifested in the members of his own flock, that he was much startled. . . . . I was made to bid those present ask instruction upon any subject on which they sought to be taught of God; and to several questions asked, answers were given by me in the power. One in particular was so answered with such reference to the circumstances of the case, of which in myself I was wholly ignorant, as to convince the person who asked it that the Spirit speaking in me knew those circumstances, and alluded to them in the answer." This further development of the gift, after a momentary doubt, was received with still fuller gratitude and trust by Irving, who communicated the news, as follows, to his friend Mr Story, transmitting the message itself, as well as the claims of the messenger to increased honour and reverence.

"London, 27th January, 1832.

"My dear Brother,—It has been said in the Spirit by a brother (Robert Baxter of Doncaster; he has written several papers in the *Morning Watch*), that the Two Witnesses are two orders of anointed men, the prophets and the priests, the one after the Old Testament, the other after the New Testament form; the one those who speak with tongues, and to whom the Word of the Lord comes without power to go beyond or fall within; the other the apostolical, in whom the Spirit of Jesus dwells as in Jesus Himself for utterance of every sort, with demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. For the last six months, the Spirit hath been moving him, and uttering by him privately; but his mouth was not opened till Friday week, when he was reading the Scriptures and praying at our early service. From that time for more than a week he continued [among us*] speaking in the power and demonstration of the Spirit with great authority, always concluding in the Spirit with a benediction. To me it seems to be the apostolical office for which I have had faith given to me to [pray] both publicly and privately these many months. I gave him liberty to speak on the Lord's day, but God did not see it meet. A clergyman of the [Church] had the faith to give him his pulpit last Sunday, when he prayed in the Spirit. He said in the Spirit that the two orders of witnesses were now present in the Church, the 1260 days of witnessing are begun, and that within three and a half years, the saints will be taken up, according to the 12th chapter of the Apocalypse. (This is not to date the Lord's coming, which is some time after His saints are with Him.) Also, he said in the Spirit that ordination by the hands of the Church is cut short in judgment, and that God Himself is about to set forth by the Spirit a spiritual ministry, for which we ought to prepare

* This letter is torn and partly illegible. The few words in brackets are filled in from the evident meaning of the context.

the people. That both the Church and the State are accursed; that the abomination of iniquity is set up in this land, and that here the witnesses will be slain; that many people, multitudes, will be gathered of the people, a goodly number of the nobles, and the king himself, given to the prayers of his people; but that the nation and the Church will be else destroyed. That the pestilence and the sword will overflow the land, but the people of God preserved; and that those who are looking for the coming of the Lord, should set their house in order, and be sitting loose. These things I believe, some of them I understand, others I have not yet attained to. I write them for your reflection; do not make them matter of news, but of meditation. The Lord greatly blesses my ministry. His way is wonderfully opened among us, and those that know Him gather strength daily. I have no doubt that He is preparing the way of a great work in my church, through much reproach and apparent foolishness. My own soul hath greater entrance unto God. The Lord is leavening this city with His truth. Every night there are several places at which the men of the congregation gather the poor to discourse to them. I seldom preach less than seven times a week, and we meet more than two hundred every morning for prayer in the Church, at half-past six o'clock, and continue till eight, and have done it the winter through. I intermingle it with pastoral admonitions, and the Spirit speaks almost every morning by the prophets and interpreters. Oh, Story, thou hast grievously sinned in standing afar off from the work of the Lord, scanning it like a sceptic instead of proving it like a spiritual man! Ah, brother, repent, and the Lord will forgive thee! I am very much troubled for you; but I rejoice in your returning strength. God give you unmeasured faithfulness! . . .

"Your faithful friend and brother,

"EDWD IRVING.

"Mrs Caird is a saint of God, and hath the gift of prophecy."

Mrs Caird thus referred to, the gifted Mary Campbell of the Gairloch, who appears to have been again in London, and to whom Irving bears such emphatic testimony, had by this time failed to satisfy the expectations of her former pastor and oldest friend, the minister of Rosneath; and the sentence of approval pronounced with so much decision and brevity at the conclusion of this letter addressed to him, was Irving's manner of avoiding controversy and making his friend aware that, highly as he esteemed himself, he could hear nothing against the other, whose character had received the highest of all guarantees to his unquestioning faith. Our history has little directly to do with this remarkable woman, who does not appear distinctly even in the revelations of Mr Baxter; but I am happy to have it in my power to refer my readers to the biography of Mr Story, which has been already mentioned, for many most interesting and powerful sketches of the secondary persons who crossed and

influenced in different degrees the faith of Irving. None of all the prophetic speakers who at this time wrought into the highest dramatic excitement the little world of Regent Square, appears before us in such recognizable personality as does Mr Baxter. He tells his strange story with all the intensity of passion, and that unconscious eloquence which inspires a man when he chronicles the climax and culmination of his own life. In the wonderful sphere revealed to us in his little book, the detail of ordinary circumstances scarcely appears at all. The scene outside, in all its real and pathetic particulars, wringing some hearts and grieving many, is not visible in the closer sanctuary within, where Mr Baxter draws the curtain. There life lies rapt in ecstatic flights of devotion, yet with an inward eye always turned upon the movements of its own heart; there sudden supernatural impulses, fiery breaths of inspiration, seize upon the expectant soul—there, in a mysterious fellowship, prophet after prophet, with convulsed frame and miraculous outcry, takes up the burden and enforces the message of his predecessor; by times electrifying the little assembly with sudden denunciation of some secret sin in the midst of them, over which judgment is hanging, or of some intruding devil who has found entrance into the sacred place. The fact that these awful assemblies are in the first place collected to *dinner* makes an uncomfortable discord in the scene, till the chief seer of the company becomes himself uneasy on that score, and declares "in the power" that this assembling with a secular motive is unseemly, and must be no longer continued. But the meetings themselves continue daily, nightly, the record flowing on as if life itself must have come by the way, and these reunions alone have been the object of existence.

In this strange drama Irving appears more than a spectator, and less than an actor. He is there listening with fervent faith, trying the spirits with anxious scrutiny, his own lofty mind bringing to a species of ineffable reason and proof, those phenomena which were entirely beyond either proof or reason, both to the ecstatics who received them unhesitatingly, and to the sceptics who could not receive them at all. In the case of Mr Baxter above described, "the pastor" was "troubled," fearing that this new development of the utterance resembled the case of "two children in Gloucestershire who had been made to speak in wonderful power, and who afterwards were found to speak by a false spirit." "He came up to me," says Mr Baxter, "and said, 'Faith is very hard.' I was immediately made to address him, and reason

with him in the power, until he was fully convinced the Spirit was of God, and gave thanks for the manifestation of it." At another time this prophet, having been directed by the mysterious influence within him to proceed to the Court of Chancery, where a message was to be given him, found on proceeding there, with tragic expectations of prison and penalty, that the impulse was withheld. Deeply disappointed, he came to Irving in his discomfiture, and the pastor soothed the impatience of the inspired speaker, and re-established his failing faith. In the midst of another exciting scene, in which the exorcism of an evil spirit is attempted without success, where Mrs Caird and Baxter himself stand over the supposed demoniac, adjuring the devil to come out of him, and another prophetess of weaker frame has fainted in the excitement, Irving once more appears, exhorting them to patience—*suggesting*, as our informant significantly says, that "this kind goeth not forth but with prayer and fasting." Such is his position in that strange atmosphere where hectic expectation is always on tiptoe, and where the air throbs with spiritual presence. No prophetic message comes from his lips; but he has not relinquished his authority, the sway of a spirit which is roused, but not intoxicated, by the surrounding miracle.

In the church itself the warnings and admonitions of the new prophets had borne more wholesome fruit. A new body of Evangelists sprang up among the spiritual men of the congregation, who went preaching everywhere, sometimes even bringing upon themselves the observation of the alarmed protectors of the public peace, and "being called up before the magistrates on account of it," as Mr Baxter informs us —a harmless kind of persecution, which naturally the new preachers, in the exuberance of early zeal, made the most of. Irving himself, always so lavish in labour, was not behind in this quickening of evangelical exertion. He describes himself as preaching "seldom less than seven times a week;" besides which he had the morning meeting constantly to attend, children to cathechise, conferences to hold, and a close perpetual background of private expositions, prophesyings, and prayers, in which, without any metaphor, his entire life seems to have been occupied.

At the same time, notwithstanding the reluctant affection of the managers of the church, affairs made inevitable progress. Though it is perfectly true, on one side, that there were no direct laws of the Church of Scotland against the exercise of an entirely unexpected endowment for which no

provision had been made, and equally certain that to every man who believed these gifts genuine, no sin could be more heinous than a wilful suppression of them; yet it was still more apparent, on the other side, that nothing could be more unlike the reserved and austere worship of the Scotch Church, so carefully abstracted from everything that could excite imagination or passion, than the new and startling intervention of voices, unauthorized by any ecclesiastical rule, which introduced the whole round of human excitement into those calm Presbyterian Sabbath-days, stirring into utter antagonism, impatience, and opposition the former leaders of the community, who found themselves thus defied and thwarted on their own ground. For their minister's convictions they had the utmost tenderness and reverence, but they would indeed have been more than men could they have seen with equal forbearance the new influence, twenty times more engrossing and exacting than theirs, which had become absolute with him, and through him exercised unbounded sway in all their public religious services. Feelings less tender and Christian came in. Men who little more than a year before had pledged their honour to Irving's support against the petty persecution of the Presbytery, and maintained him in his withdrawal from its jurisdiction, now began to bethink themselves of the capabilities of that very Presbytery against which they had protested. That court only could, with any ecclesiastical consistency, arbitrate between them and their minister; and at length they seem to have reached the pitch of indignation and impatience necessary to induce them to take the humiliating step of asking the intervention of the authority which they had renounced, against the man for whose sake, a little while before, they had thrown off their allegiance. This painful conclusion was, however, reached by slow degrees. The first step towards it was taken in the beginning of the year, when—still with a forlorn and indeed most hopeless hope of breaking Irving's resolution, if they were clearly demonstrated to have the law on their side—they submitted the whole facts of the case to Sir Edward Sugden, and obtained that eminent lawyer's opinion in their favour. This decision gave an authoritative answer to the assumption that the direction of the order of worship in Regent Square church was entirely in the hands of the minister, which Irving seems to have been advised to set up in answer to their remonstrances. Armed with this document, a deputation of the trustees went to Irving, asking his final determination. "He received them cordially," writes Mr

Hamilton; "expressed himself much gratified with the kind manner in which they had always treated him, and promised to give them his answer in a few days." A Sunday intervened before this answer was given; and on that day, after each service in the church, Irving forestalled the formal intimation, which, indeed, so thoroughly were his sentiments known, was nothing more than a form, by a public statement from the pulpit, which Mr Hamilton, following the course of events in anxious and minute detail, reports to Kirkcaldy. "I have something of great importance to say to you," said the preacher, according to his brother-in-law's report:—

"I do not know whether I may ever look this congregation again in the face in this place, and whether the doors of the church will not be shut against me during this week. If it be so, it will be simply because I have refused to allow the voice of the Spirit of God to be silenced in this church. No man has anything to say against me. I have offended no ordinance of God or man, and I have broken no statute of man. No one has found any fault with me at all except in the matter of my God—nay, on the contrary, every one has pronounced me even more abundant in my labours and more diligent in my duties of late; and also that my preaching has been more simple and edifying than formerly. The church has been enlarged; many souls have been converted by the voice of the Spirit; the church has fallen off in nothing; and altogether the work of the Lord has been proceeding. But because I am firm in my honour of God and reverence for His ordinances, we are come to this. Now I must provide for my flock. What are you to do? You must not come here. Here the Spirit of God has been cast out, and none can prosper who come here to worship. Go not to any church where they look shyly on the work of the Spirit. We must 'not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.' This, then, I advise for the present, that each householder who is a member of this flock do gather around him those in his neighbourhood who are not householders, and joining to them the poor, do exhort them and expound to them the word of the Lord. . . . And if he has no gifts, there are plenty of young men in this church who are gifted, and who are willing to be so employed, and I myself am willing to be helpful in all ways in this work. All the other meetings of the church will be held in my house. Let no one be troubled for me: I am not troubled. When I came to London, I said, 'Let me have the liberty to preach the Gospel without let or hindrance, and I am ready to come without any bond or money transaction; and if there is any difficulty, let me come and be among you from house to house.' To these kind friends I am beholden. They have ever provided me with what was needful; but I have never counted my house my own, nor my money my own; they have been for the brethren. And now I am ready to go forth and leave them, if the Lord's will be so. If we should be cast out for the truth, let us rejoice; yea, let us exceedingly rejoice."

Such was the sorrowful elder's account of this address

which comes through his memory evidently dimmed out of its natural eloquence, but touching in the perfect truthfulness of its appeal to the recollection at once of the hearers and of the speaker himself. Many of those who heard Irving speak these words could prove from their own remembrance the lofty disinterestedness with which he had begun his career, and none more than the men who now felt it necessary to take from him the house and income which, as he says, "he never counted his own." What prospect of compulsory silence to himself or dispersion to his flock had been in his mind, prompting that singular piece of advice to "every householder," it is impossible to tell. Perhaps when he spread the lawyer's judgment before the Lord, dark indications of future trouble had trembled on the prophetic lips, and nothing which he could interpret as a clear indication of the Divine will had made light in the darkness of the future. But, however that might be, his course was decided. If even he had to be silent from that work of preaching which had at all times been his chosen occupation, he who would have come to London ten years before without "bond or money transaction," only to have "the liberty of preaching the Gospel," was now ready to relinquish not only all his living, but that dearer privilege, the very power of preaching, if so it must be, rather than put any limit upon the utterances which he believed Divine. The next day, after this intimation to the people, he gave the formal answer which had been demanded from him to the trustees of the church.

"13, Judd Place East, 28th February, 1832.

"My dear Brethren,—I have read over the opinion of Sir Edward Sugden, which you were so kind as to submit to me, and I have taken a full week to consider of it. The principle on which I have acted is to preserve the integrity of my ministerial character unimpaired, and to fulfil my office according to the word of God. If the trust-deed do fetter me therein, I knew it not when the trust-deed was drawn, and am sure that it never was intended in the drawing of it; for certainly I would not, to possess all the churches of this land, bind myself one iota from obeying the great Head and Bishop of the Church. But if it be so that you, the trustees, must act to prevent me and my flock from assembling to worship God, according to the word of God, in the house committed into your trust, we will look unto our God for preservation and safe keeping. Farewell! may the Lord have you in His holy keeping!

"Your faithful and affectionate friend,
Edwd Irving."

After this, he was vexed with no more of those affectionate and importunate arguments which had tried his tender heart

for months before. The division was now accepted as final. compromise was no longer possible, and nothing remained but to prove his divergence from the rules of Presbyterian worship, and to close the church-doors upon him. "The trustees," said Sir Edward Sugden, "ought immediately to proceed to remove Mr Irving from his pastoral charge, by making complaint to the London Presbytery in the manner pointed out by the deed." It was now understood by both parties that this was the only course to be adopted; and the minister who had withdrawn from the censures of that Presbytery a year before, disowning its jurisdiction—and the men* who had rallied round him then, and solemnly declared their entire approval at once of that act and of the sentiments which had roused the Presbytery into censure—had now to approach that obscure tribunal to have the matter between them decided; the one to stand at the unfriendly bar, the others to prosecute their charge against him.

If Irving had carried matters with a high hand once, when, secure of support and rich in friends, he shook off the dust from his feet in testimony against the arbitrary condemnation of his former brethren, the reverse that befell him now, when forced to return and plead his cause before them, would have been mortification enough to any ordinary man. He accepted it, however, with lofty composure, and without a complaint, throwing no obstacles in the way of those for whose relief and satisfaction this trial was to be inflicted on him.

It was not till the 22nd of March that the Presbytery received the complaint of the trustees. An entire month consequently elapsed between the solemn intimation made by Irving to his people, that their church would probably be closed upon them, and the commencement of the proceedings. This month passed in the ordinary labours—the extraordinary devotions common to his life. Every wintry morning dawned upon the servant of God amid prayers and prophesyings while he stood, the first to hear and to worship amid the early company, never intermitting, notwithstanding his faith, the pastor's anxious care that admonition should be mingled with revelation, and that the spirits should prove themselves to be of God, by acknowledging the name that is above all names; every laborious evening fell, filled up till its latest moments with his Master's business. Day by day he preached, day by day sent forth other men into the streets and highways to preach—if not like him, yet with hearts touched by

* The Trustees and Kirk-session were not identical; but the most influential of Irving's opponents were members of both.

the same fire; over those perpetual evangelist proclamations without, and that wonderful world of expectation within, in which at any moment God's audible voice might thrill the worshippers, the days passed one by one, mingling the din of busy London, the incidents of common life, the domestic voices and tender tones of children, with the highest strain of human toil, and climax of human emotion. Such a cadence and rhythmical overflow of life few men have ever attained. The highest dreams of imagination, trembling among things incomprehensible, could realize nothing more awful, nothing so certain to take entire possession of the fascinated soul as those utterances of the Spirit if they were true—and they *were* true to Irving's miraculous heart; while, at the same time, no labouring man could imagine a more ceaseless round of toil than that by which he kept the mighty equilibrium of his soul, and counterpoised with generous work the excitement and agitation which might otherwise have overwhelmed him. Between those two consuming yet compensating spheres, the man himself, not yet exhausted, stands in a pale glow of suffering and injured love, wounded in the house of his friends, with a hundred arrows in the heart which knows no defence against the assault of unkind words and averted looks. He makes no outcry of his own suffering. There, where he stands, the dearest voices murmur at him with taunts of cruel wisdom or censures of indignant virtue. They say he seeks notoriety, courts the wild suffrage of popular applause, they cast at him common nicknames of enthusiasm, fanaticism, delusion; they call him arrogant, presumptuous, vain—even, with more vulgar tongues, religious trickster and cheat. In the very fulness of that lofty and prodigal existence, the blow strikes to the fountains of life. A friend had once said to him that Christians ought to rejoice when the outside world despised and contemned the Church. "Ah, no!" answered, with a sigh, this soul experienced in such trials, "Reproach hath broken my heart!" These words breathe out of his uncomplaining lips at this crisis with ineffable sadness, sometimes breaking forth in pathetic outbursts of that grief which, in its passion and vehemence, sounds almost like the lofty wrath of the old prophets, and giving sometimes a momentary thrill of discord to his undiminished eloquence. Already he had entered deep into the pangs of martyrdom.

With strange calmness, after these utterances of emotion, Mr Hamilton's sensible, regretful voice interposes once more in the narrative, telling over again, with the sigh of impatient

wonder natural to a man so sagacious and unexcitable, those same prophecies and revelations given by Mr Baxter, which Irving had reported in full conviction of their importance. "I merely mention the above, to give you some idea of the nature of the manifestations which have been made in the church," he writes. "There have been others, however, of a much more comforting tendency. I believe that a large proportion of the present congregation agree with Edward in the belief of the reality of those manifestations, and that they will follow him wherever he may remove to; and I must say that they are in general very pious people, zealous for God, and most exemplary in the discharge of their religious duties. As for Edward, he continues unwearied and unceasing in his labours; indeed, it is a marvel to me how he is able to bear up under them all. I never knew any man so devoted to the service of his Master, or more zealous in the performance of what he conceives to be his duty."

Such being the condition of affairs, the question came before the London Presbytery to its final trial.

Before, however, these final proceedings were commenced, Irving addressed yet another letter to his opponents. It is without date, but was evidently intended to reach them on the occasion of a conclusive meeting, of which he had been informed; and, while less familiar and more solemn than his former letters, still overflows with personal affection.

"Men and Brethren,—As a man and the head of a family, bound to provide for himself and those of his own house, I am enabled of God to be perfectly indifferent to the issue of your deliberations this night, though it should go to deprive me of all my income, and cast me—after ten years of hard service, upon the wide world, with my wife and my children—forth from a house which was built almost entirely upon the credit of my name, and primarily for my life enjoyment, where also the ashes of my children repose.

"As a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath been honoured of Him to bring forth from obscurity a whole system of precious truth, and especially to proclaim to this land the glad and glorious tidings of His speedy coming, and strengthened of Him to stand for the great bulwarks of the faith, ofttimes almost single and alone, I am still indifferent to the issue of this night's deliberations, which can bring little addition to the burdens of one groaning under the reproach of ten thousand tongues, in ten thousand ways put forth against his good and honourable name. For I am well assured that my God whom I serve, and for whom I suffer reproach, will support and richly reward me, even though ye also should turn against me, whom the Lord set to be a defence and protection round about me. As the pastor of a flock, consisting of several hundreds of precious souls, and the minister of the word unto

thousands weekly, nay, daily, congregating into our beautiful house, though it hath cost me many a pang I am also entirely resigned to His will, and can cast them all upon His rich and bountiful providence, who is the good Shepherd of the sheep, and doth carry the lambs in His bosom, and gently lead those that are great with young. On no account, therefore, be ye assured, personal to myself as a man, as a minister of Christ, or as a pastor of His people, do I intrude myself upon your meeting this night with this communication; but for your sakes I wait, even for yours, who are, every one of you, dear to my heart. Bear with me, then, the more patiently, seeing it is for your sakes I take up my pen to write.

"I do you solemnly to wit, men and brethren, before Almighty God, the heart-searcher, that whosoever lifteth a finger against the work which is proceeding in the Church of Christ under my pastoral care, is rising up against the Holy Ghost; and I warn him, even with tears, to beware and stand back, for he will assuredly bring upon himself the wrath and indignation of the God of heaven and earth, if he dare to go forward. Many months of most painstaking and searching observation, the most varied proofs of every kind, taken with all the skill and circumspection which the Lord hath bestowed upon me; the substance of the doctrine, the character of the Spirit, and the form and circumstances of the utterances tried by the Holy Scriptures, and whatever remains most venerable in the traditions of the Church; the present power and penetration of the Word spoken, over the souls of the most holy persons, with the abiding effects of edification upon hundreds who have come under my own personal knowledge; the nature of the opposition which, from a hundred quarters, most of them entirely indifferent, infidel, and atheistical, hath arisen against it, together with the effects which the opposition hath had upon the minds of honest and good persons who have stumbled at it; their haste and headiness; their unrest and trouble of mind; the attempt of Satan, by mimicry of the work, and thrusting in upon it of seduction and devil-possessed persons to mar it, and the jealous holiness with which God hath detected all these attempts, and watched over His own work to keep it from intermixture and pollution; and above all, the testimony of the Holy Ghost in my own conscience, as a man serving God with my house; the discernment of the same Holy Ghost in me as a minister over His truth and watchman over His people; all these, and many other things, which I am not careful to set out in order, or at large, seeing the time for argument is gone by, and the time for delivering a man's soul is come, do leave not a shadow of doubt on my mind, that the work which hath begun under the roof of our sanctuary, and which many of you are taking steps to prevent from proceeding there, is the WORK of God,—is verily the MIGHTY WORK of God, the most sacred work of the Holy Ghost; which to blaspheme, is to blaspheme the Holy Ghost; which to act against, is to act against the Holy Ghost. This is the guilt of the action you are proceeding in; whether there be sufficient cause for bringing down such a load upon your heads, dearly-beloved brethren, judge ye. For my part, I would rather, were I a trustee, lose all my property ten times told than move a finger in hinderance of this great work of God, which God calleth on you to further by all means in your power, and to abide the consequences, of a prosecution, yea, all consequences between life and death, rather

than hinder. Oh, 'what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'

"You have determined to lodge a complaint against me to the London Presbytery, for no immorality of conduct, for no neglect of duty, for no breach of good faith, for no change of ordinance proper to the Church of Scotland, for no departure from the constitution of the Church of Scotland, for no cause, in point of fact, which was or could have been contemplated in the formation of the trust-deed, but simply and solely because God, in His great love and mercy, hath restored the gifts of Providence to the church under my care, and I, the responsible minister under Christ, being convinced thereof, have taken it upon me to order it according to the mind and will of Christ, the only Head and Potentate of His Church, as the same is expressed in the Holy Scriptures. I ask ye before God, and as ye shall answer at the great day, if the trust-deed could have been intended to prevent the spiritual gifts from ever being exercised within the building, or from being ordered according to the word of God? May I go further, and ask whether the constitution of the Church of Scotland, or of any church, could be intended to keep the voice of Jesus from being heard, as heretofore it was wont to be, within the assemblies of His people? Oh, beloved brethren, how can you find it in your hearts to complain against one who hath been so faithful amongst you to declare the whole counsel of God, and to do everything by night and by day for the good of the flock and of all men, merely because he hath been faithful to his Lord, as well as to the people of the Lord, and would not by a mountain of opposition be daunted from acknowledging the work and walking by the counsel of his God? I beseech you to search your hearts, and examine how much of this complaint ariseth from a desire to do your duty as trustees, how much from dislike and opposition to the work, from the influence of the popular stream, and the fear of the popular odium, from your own pride of heart and unwillingness to examine anything new, from the love of being at ease in Zion, and from other evil causes over which I have a constant jealousy in myself, and in my flock, whom I should love better than myself. I do not judge any one in this matter; but I would be blind indeed if I did not discern the working of these and the like motives of the flesh in many of you, and I would be unfaithful if I did not mention them. I fear lest I may have been unfaithful in time past; if so, God forgive me, and do you forgive me, and take this as the last and complete expression of my love to all of you. Oh, my brethren, take time and think what tenant may be expected to come and take up his abode in that house from which the Holy Ghost hath been cast forth! It will never prosper or come to any good until it hath been cleansed from this abomination by sore and sorrowful repentance. How can you make a fashion of calling it a house of praise or prayer any longer, after having banished forth of it the voice of Jesus lifted up in the midst of the church of His saints, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost? Surely disappointment and defeat will rest upon it for ever. God will not bless it; the servants of God will flee away from it; it will stand a monument of folly and infatuation. Nay, so much hath the Lord made me to perceive the iniquity of this thing, that I believe it will bring down judgment upon all who take part in it, upon their

houses, upon the city itself in which the National Scotch Church hath been a lamp, yea, and a light unto the whole land, and to the distant parts of the earth. Oh, my brethren, retrace your steps, leave this work in the hands of the Lord. Come forward and confess your sin in having thought or spoken evil against it. Come to the help of God against the mighty. I beseech you to hear my words. They have been written with prayer and fasting; and when I read them over about an hour ago in the hearing of one gifted with the Spirit, that the Lord, if He saw good, might express His mind, the consequences which he denounced upon the doing of this act were frightful to hear. I had little thought of mentioning this to any one, but it seemeth to be not right to hide it in my own breast. If you desire, dear brethren, any personal communication with me upon this awful subject, I beseech you to send for me, and I will be at your call; for I could stand to be tortured from head to foot, rather than any one of you should go forward in such an undertaking, as to prevent the voice of God from being heard in any house over which you have any jurisdiction.

"May the Lord preserve you from all evil, and lead you in the way of His own blessed will! Amen, and Amen!

"Your faithful and loving pastor and friend,

"Edwd Irving."

The trustees of the church received this impassioned appeal, knowing better than any other men how true were those assertions of his own purity and faithfulness to which Irving was driven; but with such an address in their hands went forward, calmly, to the Presbytery, and presented the complaint, which he marvels, with grieved surprise and wounded affection, how they could "find it in their heart" to prefer against him. This complaint, which begins by setting forth the character of the trust-deed, and the rigid particularity with which it had bound the Regent Square church to the worship of the Church of Scotland, finally settles into five charges against the minister. Perhaps it was in tenderness for him that every hint of divergence in doctrine, or even of extravagance in belief, was kept back from this strange indictment; but it is impossible to read, without wonder, those charges upon which the existence of a congregation, and the position of a man so notable and honoured, now depended. They are as follows:—

"*First.*—That the Rev. Edward Irving has suffered and permitted, and still allows, the public services of the church in the worship of God, on the Sabbath and other days, to be interrupted by persons not being either ministers or licentiates of the Church of Scotland.

"*Second.*—That the said Rev. Edward Irving has suffered and permitted, and still allows, the public services of the said church, in the worship of God, to be interrupted by persons not being either members or seatholders of the said church.

"*Third.*—That the said Rev. E. Irving has suffered and permitted, and also publicly encourages, females to speak in the same church, and

to interrupt and disturb the public worship of God in the church on Sabbath and other days.

"*Fourth.*—That the said Rev. E. Irving hath suffered and permitted, and also publicly encourages, other individuals, members of the said church, to interrupt and disturb the public worship of God in the church on Sabbath and other days.

"*Fifth.*—That the said Rev. E. Irving, for the purpose of encouraging and exciting the said interruptions, has appointed times when a suspension of the usual worship in the said church takes place, for said persons to exercise the supposed gifts with which they profess to be endowed."

After all the agitation and excitement, after the sorrowful struggle which had just come to an end, and all the depths of feeling and suffering involved, this bald statement comes with all the effect of an anti-climax upon the interested spectator. Was this, then, all?—these mere matters of fact—this breach of common regulation and decorum? Was this important enough to call for all the formal paraphernalia of law—the reverend bench of judges—the witnesses and examinations—the pleas of accuser and defender? The court, we may be sure, had no mind to confine itself to the mere proof of charges so trifling in themselves. A month after the presentation of this indictment, the Presbytery assembled for "the hearing of parties." There were present six ministers and three elders; and the place of meeting was the old Scotch Church in London Wall. A Mr Mann, one of the trustees, appeared for the complainers; Irving stood by himself on his defence—Mr Cardale, a solicitor, accompanying him, and making what hopeless attempts he could, now and then, to recall the precautions of a court of justice to the recollection of the assembly. The witnesses called by the complainers were three of Irving's closest supporters; one, a "gifted person," who had himself taken a very decided part in the "interruptions" which he was called to prove. Thus, with wonderful and apparently causeless cruelty, in very strange contrast to the consideration they had hitherto shown him, his opponents contrived his downfal by the hands of those who not only believed with him, but one of whom had been an actual instrument of his peril.

On this same eventful April morning, before coming with those three witnesses, whom a common faith made his natural defenders, but whom the selection of his adversaries had chosen to substantiate their case against him, to the court where he was to take his place at the bar, a still more cruel and utterly unexpected blow fell upon Irving. He who, of all the prophetic speakers, had spoken with most boldness, and claimed the highest authority; he who, "in the power," had expounded

the most mysterious prophecies of the Apocalypse, and pronounced the very limit of time, the three years and a half which were to elapse before the witnesses were received up to heaven; he whose utterances, only a month or two before, Irving, in all the assurance of utter trust, had sent to his friends that they too might be edified and triumph in the light which God was giving to his Church; Robert Baxter came suddenly up from Yorkshire to intimate the total downfall of his own pretensions, and to disown the inspiration of which so short a time before he had convinced the troubled pastor, who for that once found it "hard" to believe. "I reached him on the morning of his appearance before the Presbytery of London," writes this penitent, apparently as impetuous and absolute in his renunciation as in his former claims. "Calling him and Mr J. Cardale apart, I told them my conviction that we had all been speaking by a lying spirit, and not by the Spirit of God." A most startling and grievous preface to the defence which was that day to be made. The little group went doubtless with troubled souls to that encounter, knowing well how strong a point this would be for their opponents, and themselves dismayed and brought to a sudden stand-still by a desertion so unlooked for. Had Irving's heart been discourageable, or his faith less than a matter of life and death, such a blow, falling at such a time, might well have disabled him altogether. There is no trace that it had any effect upon him on that important day. When they had reached London Wall, and the Moderator of the Presbytery was opening the sitting with prayer, a message suddenly burst, with echoing preface of the "tongue," from one of the three witnesses. Perhaps it comforted that heart torn with many sorrows, which, when needing so emphatically all its strength, had been subject to so overwhelming a discouragement. At all events, it was with dignity and steadfastness unbroken that Irving met the harassing and irritating process which now opened.

It is impossible to give any report of this trial in the limited space permitted me here. It was as irrelevant, confused, and partial as an examination conducted by untrained and biassed judges must always be, but there is one remarkable feature in it which I may note in passing. The three witnesses examined upon oath proved, as far as a man's solemn asseveration can, not that unlawful and riotous interruptions had taken place in the Regent Square church, but that the Holy Ghost had there spoken with demonstration and power. This was the real evidence elicited by the day's examination. Nobody attempted to impeach the men, or

declare them unworthy of ordinary credit; and this was the point which, according to the common principles of evidence, they united to establish. I cannot tell what might be the motive of the complainants for keeping back all who held their own view of the question, and resting their case solely upon the testimony of believers in the gifts; but the fact is apparent enough, and one of the most strange features of the transaction, that the witnesses, upon whom no imputation of falsehood was cast, consistently and solemnly agreed in proving an hypothesis which the court that received their testimony, and professed to be guided by their evidence, not only negatived summarily, but even refused to take into consideration.

From this day's work, anxious and harassing as it naturally must have been to him, Irving went home, not to rest, or refresh among his loyal supporters the spirit which was grieved with the antagonism of his former brethren, but to meet with Mr Baxter, and to be assailed by that gentleman's eager argument to prove himself in the wrong, and attempts to overthrow the fabric which he had done so much to bring into being. "I saw him again in the evening, and on the succeeding morning I endeavoured to convince him of his error of doctrine, and of our delusions concerning the work of the Spirit," says the prophet, so suddenly disenchanted, and so vehement in his abrupt recantation, "but he was so shut up, he could not see either." This evening and morning, which were vexed by Mr Baxter's arguments, might well have been spared to the all-labouring man, who was now to appear for himself at the bar of the Presbytery, and make, before the curious world which watched the proceedings in that obscure Scotch church at London Wall, his defence and self-vindication. Fresh from the endeavours of Mr Baxter to convince him that the most cherished belief of his heart was a delusion, Irving once more took his way through the toiling city in the April sunshine which beguiles even London into spring looks and hopes. Little sunshine, only a lofty constancy and steadfast composure of faith, was in his heart—that heart which had throbbed with so many heroic hopes and knightly projects under those same uncertain skies. Another of the "gifted," who had woven so close a circle round him, had just then lost heart, and wavered like Baxter in her faith. With such discouragements in his way, and with all the suggestions of self-interest (so far as he was capable of them), and a hundred more delicate appeals, reminders of old affection and tender habitude, to hold him back to the old paths, he went to the bar of the Presbytery.

The speech he was to make that day must tear asunder, in irrevocable disruption, the little remnant of life which remained to him from all the splendid past—must throw him into a new world, strange to all his associations, unacquainted with those ways of thought and habit he was born in, totally unaware of the extent and bitterness of his sacrifice. The intrusive apparition of the prophet penitent, declaring his own prophetic gift a delusion, made the strangest climax to the darkness, the pain, and the difficulty of the position. Irving, however, showed no signs of hesitation—betrayed no tumult in his mind. His faith was beyond the reach even of such a blow; and, in full possession of all that natural magnificence of diction, noble reality, and power of moving men's hearts, which even his enemies could not resist, he presented himself to make his defence.

His speech, which is too long to quote, and which was interrupted two or three times by hot discussions and calls to order, was replied to on the same day by Mr Mann, the spokesman of the trustees, who "considered it his duty to reply to the unseemly and untimely denunciations with which he was bold to say the reverend defender had attempted to stem the torrent of justice." After this the court adjourned for a week, during the course of which the "reverend defender" thus assailed went on with those labours which one of his friends calls "unexampled," in no way withdrawing from his wonderful exertions, preparing, with all the catechisings and preparatory services usual before a Scotch communion, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. On the following Wednesday the Presbytery again assembled; and, with a gleam of magnanimity, in consideration of the fact that Irving had no appeal from their decision, but—contrary to Presbyterian usage, which, had he been in Scotland, would have permitted him a double appeal to the Provincial Synod and the General Assembly—must accept their sentence as final, offered him the privilege of answering the speech of Mr Mann, which he did accordingly in an impassioned and noble oration, still more intense, because more personal, than the former; thrilling with all the indignation, the grief, the faith absolute and immovable, the injured and mournful affection which rent his breast. That there are some passages in this splendid address where the speaker, flushed with palpable injustice, and angry in his righteous heart at the superficial basis on which a question to himself the most momentous, was thus injuriously set down, delivers himself of warnings too solemn and startling to chime in with the mild phrase-

ology of modern days, is undeniable; but the point on which he insists is so plainly a necessity to any just decision of the matter involved, that few people who consider it seriously will be surprised to find that Irving is betrayed into a certain impatience by the pertinacious determination, shown equally by his accusers and his judges, *not* to enter into the question by which alone the case could be decided. Such a singular and obstinate evasion of the real point at issue, involving as it did all his dearest interests, might well chafe the spirit of the meekest of men; yet he returns again and again with indignant patience to the question which his judges refused to consider.

"If these be the manifestations of the Holy Ghost," he asks, "what court under heaven would dare to interpose and say they shall not be suffered to proceed? Tell me if that body does exist on the face of the earth which would dare to rule it so if they believed the work to be of the Holy Ghost? Surely not in the Christian Church does such a body exist. Therefore the decision must entirely depend on this: whether it be of the Holy Ghost, or whether it be not of the Holy Ghost. For if it be, who dare gainsay it? Will any one say, if it be of the Holy Ghost, that any rule of discipline or statute of the Church, supposing the statutes were sevenfold strong instead of being none at all—for on this subject the canons of the Church of Scotland are entirely silent—will any one dare to say that if it be the voice of the Holy Ghost, all laws and statutes in which, during the days of her ignorance, the Church might have sought to defend herself against the entering in of the Spirit of God, should be allowed to keep Him out? And is it possible that the Presbytery should shuffle off the burden of this issue, and act upon the assertion made that it is not the matter of doctrine which is to be entered into; the more when the evidence upon the table is unanimous to this point, that it is the voice of the Holy Ghost?"

After this most just protest, he descends to enter the lists with his accusers upon their own ground, and asserts that "there is not one word in the standards against the thing I have done;" the fact being that the only reference in those documents, according to the admission of the Presbytery themselves, is a statement in the Westminster Confession, that the "extraordinary" offices of apostle, prophet, &c., had ceased—a statement which the earlier Book of Discipline, the authority of which the Church of Scotland had never repudiated, limits by the more modest suggestion, that "they may be revived if the Lord sees good." After this Irving enters into a most remarkable discussion of the character of the prophetic office, and the possibility of a prophet deceiving himself by attempting to make an arbitrary interpretation of

the Divine message he utters; in which he takes as his text the singular utterance of the prophet Jeremiah—"O Lord, Thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived"—and proceeds to elucidate a character which most of his hearers believed utterly extinct, with all the close and intense observation which distinguished him; and with a lofty, visionary reasonableness which, could the character itself be but granted real and existent, would make this an exposition of high metaphysical value. In the course of this singular and close picture of the prophetic temperament and its perils, he refers in the following terms to Baxter, whose name was by this time discussed everywhere, and whose desertion was the heaviest possible blow in the eyes of the public to the new faith.

"A dear friend of my own," said Irving, coming fresh from that troublesome and impetuous friend's remonstrances and recantation, "who lately spake by the Spirit of God in my Church—as all the spiritual of the church fully acknowledged, and almost all acknowledge still—I mean Mr Baxter, whose name is in everybody's mouth, hath, I believe, been taken in this very snare of endeavouring to interpret by means of a mind remarkably formal in its natural structure the spiritual utterances which he was made to give forth; and perceiving a want of concurrence between the word and the fulfilment, he hastily said, 'It is a lying spirit by which I have spoken.' No lie is of the truth; no prophet is a liar; and if the thing came not to pass, he hath spoken presumptuously. But while this is true, it is equally true that no prophet since the world began has been able to interpret the time, place, manner, and circumstance of the fulfilment of his own utterances. And to Jeremiah thus unwarrantably employing himself, God seemed to be a deceiver and a liar, as the Holy Ghost hath seemed to be to my honoured and beloved friend, whom may the Lord speedily restore again."

The orator then, leaving this mysterious subject—to his exposition of which his audience seems to have listened in rapt silence, probably too much carried away by the strange influence of his faith, and the life-like personality in which he clothed this unbelievable prophetic ideal, to object—returns to the more personal question, and bursts forth in natural and manful indignation. "I was taxed with dishonesty," he exclaims, "and I was told if I was an honest man I ought to have gone forth of the Church. Let me repress the feeling that riseth in my bosom, while I repel the insinuation; for I must not speak out of the resentment of nature, but out of the charity of grace. *Dishonesty!* if it be such a moot point and simple case of honesty and dishonesty, why trouble they the Presbytery to consider it? . . . It is a great and grave question affecting the rights of the

ministers and prophets of the Christian Church; a question of the most deep and sacred importance; a question not of discipline only, but of doctrine; and is a question of doctrine and of discipline, and of ordinance and of personal right, to be called a question of common honesty, as if I were a knave?" Then changing, as he could, with the highest intuition of harmony, the stops of that noble organ, the great preacher falls into the strain of self-exposition, so full of simple grandeur, with which he was wont to reveal the working of his own candid soul and tender heart.

"This is a temptation which has come over my brethren, arising from their loose and unholy way of thinking and speaking upon this subject, as if it were a common bargain between the trustees upon the one hand and myself upon the other. I would it had been such; neither they nor you would have been troubled with it this day. For the world is wide, and the English tongue is widely diffused over it; and I am used to live by faith, and love my calling as a preacher of the Gospel as well as I do my calling of a pastor. I also have been tempted with the like temptation of making this a matter of personal feeling. One whole day, I remember, before meeting the elders and deacons of my church, upon the first breaking out of this matter, I abode in the mind of giving way to my own feelings, and saying to them, 'Brethren, we have abidden now for so many years in love and unity, never, or hardly once, dividing on any question, that rather than cause divisions which I see cannot be avoided, I will take my leave of you, and betake myself to other quarters and other labours in the Church. And do you seek out for some one to come and stand in my room, to go in and out before this great people, and rule over them, for I can no longer be faithful to God, and preserve the body in peace and unity. I cannot find in my heart to grieve you; let me alone and entreat me not; I will go and preach the Gospel in other parts, whither God may call me.' In this mood, which these men* would call honest and honourable—which I call selfish and treacherous to my Lord and Master—I did abide for the greater part of the most important day of my life, whereof the evening was to determine this great question; but the Lord showed me before the hour came—He showed me, with whom alone I took counsel in the secret place of my own heart, that I was not a private man to do what liked me best, but the pastor of a church, to consider their well-being, and the minister of Christ, to whom I must render an account of my stewardship. I put away the temptation and went up in the strength of the Lord to contend with the men whom I loved as my own bowels; and to tell them, face to face, that I would displease every one of them, yea, and hate every one of them, if

* In justice to the speaker on the other side, it ought, however, to be noted here that Irving seems to have mistaken his meaning, which I presume to be the ordinary, arbitrary, and easy conclusion, that when a clergyman expands or alters his views, so as under any interpretation to vary from the laws of his Church, scrupulous honour would dictate his withdrawal from its communion; a notion very specious upon the face of it.

need should be, rather than flinch an iota from my firm and rooted purpose to live and die for Jesus. God only knows the great searchings of heart that there have been within me for the divisions of the Kirk-session and flock of the National Scotch Church. But they have rooted and grounded me in my standing as a pastor, which I had understood but never practised before, and in the subordinate standing of an elder, which is very little understood in the Church of Scotland, whereof I am a minister. And they have knit me to my flock in a bond which cannot be broken until God do break it. I preferred my duty as a pastor to my feelings as a man, and abode in my place. And what hath the faithfulness and bounty of my God yet done? Within six months thereafter, by the preaching of the Word and the witness of the Spirit, there were added two hundred members to the Church; not a few of whom were converted from the depths of immorality and vice to become holy and God-fearing men; and as I sat yesterday in my vestry for nearly five hours examining applicants for the liberty of sitting down with my contemned and rejected church, I thought within myself, 'Ah! it was good thou stoodest here in the place where the Lord had planted thee, and wentest not forth from hence at the bidding of thine own troubled heart. Behold what a harvest God hath given thee in this time of shaking! Wait on thy Lord, and be of good courage; commit thy way unto Him; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass.' These were my thoughts, I do assure you, no farther gone than yesterday, when I sat wearied out with the number and weight of the cases which were brought before me in my pastoral vocation. And for your encouragement, ye ministers of Christ who sit here in judgment, that ye may labour with good hopes in this city, through good report and through bad report, and that ye may not put your hands rashly upon the man of God, I do give you to wit that by my labours in this city, not hundreds, but thousands, at least upwards of a thousand, have been converted by my ministry; and I feel an assurance that, let men do their utmost to prevent it, thousands more will yet by the same feeble and worthless instrument be brought into the fold of the Father, out of which no power shall be able to pluck them. I have no bargain with these trustees. I am not their pensioner, nor bound to them by any obligation, nor indebted to them in any matter, that they should charge dishonesty upon me. I am another man's servant, another man's debtor. . . . If this deed to which they have obliged themselves, compel them to raise an action against me before this Presbytery, then let them do it, and leave the issue to the competent judges; but do not let them dare to accuse their minister as a dishonest man, because he sees it his duty to his Master to abide where his Master hath placed him, and where he hath offended neither against the ordinances of God nor the covenants of man."

Thus, in his most characteristic strain, did Irving make his defence; not without frequent reference to the great point of the first day's proceedings, which was the refusal of the Presbytery to permit his appeal to the Scriptures, a resolution against which he entered his solemn protest, but

which his judges, with many little interruptions of self-vindication, adhered to. When his speech was concluded, he withdrew with an apology to the Presbytery for his inability to be present at their decisive meeting, which was to take place the same evening, as he had to preach that night. Before he left the court, however, Mr Mann, the spokesman of the trustees, who had vainly begged to be heard in reply, assailed the much-tried defender with another arrow. One of the prophetesses, a Miss Hall, about whom I can find no details, had, like Baxter, accused herself of delusion.

"Does Mr Irving consider he has acted fairly and honestly by the Presbytery," said his accuser, who seems to have lost in the heat of conflict the affectionate and reverential feelings which all entertained towards the great preacher before this actual antagonism, with its angry impulses, commenced, "in not acknowledging to them that Miss Hall has been acting under delusion?

"*The Moderator:* That is not before the court.

"*Mr Irving:* She is one of the lambs of my flock—she is carried in my bosom. Oh, she is one of the lambs of my flock! and shall I bring one of the lambs of my flock, who may have been deluded and led astray, before a public court? Never—never, while I have a pastor's heart!"

This exclamation of natural feeling moved the general audience out of propriety. It was received with involuntary applause, which seems to have led to the immediate adjournment of the offended court.

In the evening the Presbytery met again to determine upon their sentence—a sentence on the nature of which nobody could have any doubt, if it were not the generous soul of the accused himself, who "could not endure to think" that they would decide against him. Five clerical members of the court spoke one after another, announcing with such solemnity as they could their several but unanimous conclusion. I have no desire to represent these men as judging unfairly, or as acting in this new matter upon their own well-known prior conclusions. But the fact is remarkable, in a country so familiar as ours with all the caution and minute research of law, that the judgment of this Presbytery, involving, as it did, not only the highest privileges of Christian freedom, but practical matters of property and income, uttered itself in the shape of so many opinions as loose, slight, and irregular as might be the oracles of a fireside conclave. To people who are accustomed to see the columns of newspapers filled day after day with close, lengthened, and it may be tedious, arguments concerning the true meaning of the articles of the Church, it will be almost inconceivable that

any decision, bearing weight in law, could be come to upon grounds so trivial: yet such was the case; and the extraordinary recklessness which could stake an honourable man's character and position upon the opinions or impressions of a group of fellow-clergymen, supported by the merest shreds of quotation from those articles by which, and by which alone, they professed to be guided, has never, so far as I am aware, been so much as remarked by the community most interested. If he was to be judged by the standards of the Church it must be apparent to every one that the merest superficial rules of justice required a close examination of those standards, a patient and detailed scrutiny, care being had to arrive at the true meaning, and to put aside the individual and local circumstances which so evidently and avowedly colour those productions of a belligerent age. Had the matter been argued before a civil court, it might indeed have been decided that the proceedings complained of were contrary to the *usage* of the Church of Scotland, no doubt an important point—but it must have been satisfactorily established that no ecclesiastical law * forbade them, and that no direct ordinance of the Church had been in any way transgressed.

At the same time, while this is very evidently the case, it is necessary to admit that the spiritual manifestations then taking place in Irving's church were, though contrary to no ecclesiastical canon, yet thoroughly contrary to the character and essence of Presbyterian worship; and that only the existence, not to be hoped for, of an imperturbable judicial mind, resolute in the majesty of law, and beyond the influence of feeling, in the court that judged him, could have made a different result possible. Those outbursts of prophetic voices, exciting and unexpected, were palpably at the wildest variance with the rigid decorums of that national worship which has so carefully abstracted everything which can influence either imagination or sense from its austere services. And a body of men trained to the strictest observance of this affronted order of worship, totally unaccustomed to the exactitude of law, and important in the exercise of an authority which they would have unanimously declared it an infraction of Christ's sovereignty in His Church had any qualified adviser attempted to guide, were scarcely to be supposed so superior to Presbyterial precedent as to conduct this trial on the cautious principles of civil equity.

* That this is the case, and that no such rigid adherence to the proprieties of custom binds the Church when she chooses to be tolerant, might be proved by the many irregularities permitted in connection with the late "revivals."

They quoted ecclesiastical law as uninstructed controversialists quote texts, by way of giving a certain vague authority to their own opinions, but the idea of examining scrupulously what that law really enforced and meant, or wherein the actions of the accused were opposed to it, never seems to have entered the minds of the hasty Presbyters. The Confessions of Faith and Books of Discipline, to which Irving referred so often, had in fact nothing to do with the matter. Apart from all disputed doctrine and irritated theological temper, a simple matter of fact, visible to all the world, had to be dealt with; a startling novelty had suddenly disturbed the sober composure of the Scotch Church, which was no way to be reconciled with its habitual reserve and gravity, and somehow had to be got rid of. Scotch observers looking back at the present moment, regretful of the necessity, still ask—what could they do? And I cannot tell what they could have done, except examine, and wait, and tolerate—three things which the national temperament finds more difficult than any action or exertion. "I do not dissent from your assertion that the Scotch consistory had no choice but to expel Irving from the body," writes the Rev. F. D. Maurice. "I do not say that the authorities of the English Church, if they had (unhappily) the same kind of jurisdiction, might not, or may not, exercise it in the same manner. But I know few signs which (in the latter case) I should deem so sure a prognostic of coming desolation." The Scotch mind, much less tolerant and more absolute than the English, that same mind which makes it by times a "unanimous hero nation," had already learned to make abrupt settlement of such questions; and, unless the Presbytery had been content to wait with Gamaliel and see whether this thing was of God or not, the decision they came to was the only one to be looked for from them. But the laws of the Church, those standards which they themselves set up as the ultimate reference, had absolutely nothing at all to do with the matter.

The verdict was as follows:—

Therefore this Presbytery, having seriously and deliberately considered the said complaint and the evidence adduced, together with the statements made in court by the said Rev. Edward Irving, and acting under a deep and solemn sense of their responsibility to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the great Head of the Church, do find that the charges in said complaint are fully proven; and therefore, while deeply deploring the painful necessity thus imposed upon them, they did and hereby do, decern that the said Rev. Edward Irving has rendered himself unfit to remain the minister of the National Scotch Church aforesaid, and ought

to be removed therefrom, in pursuance of the conditions of the trust-deed of the said church.

"JAMES REID BROWN,
"Moderator of the Presbytery of the Established Church of Scotland in London."

The following morning had scarcely dawned, when the triumphant press echoed and celebrated this decision. Never before was a Presbytery out of Scotland so watched and so applauded. The *Times* itself opened with a discharge of its great guns, in honour of the victory, devoting a leading article to the subject.

"The blasphemous absurdities which have for some months past been enacted in the Caledonian Church, Regent Square," says the leading journal, "are now, we trust, brought to an effectual conclusion. The Scotch Presbytery in London, who are, by the trust-deed of the chapel, appointed to decide on any alleged departure of its minister from the standards of the Kirk of Scotland, to which, by the same deed, he is sworn to adhere, last night, after a *laborious investigation*, declared that the fooleries which he had encouraged or permitted were inconsistent with the doctrine and discipline of the Scotch National Establishment. It would, indeed, have been a subject of wonder had they come to a different conclusion, though they had had the benefit of a concert upon the 'tongues' from the whole male and female band of Mr Irving's select performers. So long as the rev. gentleman occupied the stage himself," continues this great authority in religious doctrine, "he was heard with patience—perhaps, sometimes with pity; . . . . but when he entered into partnership with knaves and impostors, to display their concerted 'manifestations'—when he profaned the sanctuary of God, by introducing hideous interludes of 'the unknown tongues,' it was impossible any longer to tolerate the nuisance."

Such terms had Irving, with his lofty sense of honour and chivalrous truthfulness, to hear applied to himself, and to endure. The *Record*, with milder but not less triumphant satisfaction, follows in a similar strain, emphasizing its rejoicing by congratulating its readers, not only upon Baxter's recantation, but upon the timely withdrawal of Irving's assistant and missionary from the falling house—that gentleman having not only had his eyes opened to the delusion of the gifts, but also to the "awful heresy in regard to our Lord's humanity, which it has been the privilege of this journal steadfastly to resist." Such were the pæans with which the perfectly illogical and indefensible decision of the London Presbytery was received in the outside world; and such the accompaniments with which this heavy blow fell upon Irving. The assistant who deserted him at so painful a crisis, had been his companion for but a short time, and appears but little either

in the history of the struggle, or in those all-demonstrative letters in which Irving, incapable of concealment, reveals his heart and soul.

It is a relief to turn from all this misrepresentation and injustice; from the reckless Presbyters who refused to examine either their own law or the real question at issue; from the contemptuous journalists, to whom this matter was only one of the wonders of the day, a fanaticism as foreign and unintelligible as heaven; from disenchanted prophets and failing friends; to Irving himself, spending the next day after, morning and evening and at noon, in the labours and devotions of that dedicated day preparatory to the communion, which Scottish piety still calls *par excellence* the Fast-day, totally as the ordinance of fasting has disappeared from the nation. He did not intermit those services, although it was now uncertain whether the church would be open to him on the next Sunday for the celebration of the sacrament. "The tokens* were given, to be kept (if not delivered up on Sunday), as a bond of union till such time as the Lord shall guide the flock to some other place of refuge," writes a lady, whose diffuse woman's letter deepens into momentary pathos when, speaking of Irving in that day's services, she exclaims, "I verily believe he offered to God the sacrifice of a *broken* heart." It was the last sacrifice of his ever to be offered in that place where "the ashes of his children rested," as he himself mournfully said. The next morning, in the early May sunshine, before the world was half awake, the daily congregation gathering to their matins, found the gates of the church closed upon them. Perhaps it was that "wrath with those we love," working "like madness in the brain," the bitter anger of a brother offended, which moved the trustees to so abrupt a use of their power. "I strongly urged them to allow the church to remain open till after the dispensation of the sacrament," writes Mr Hamilton, who had been a sad spectator throughout, specially intimating his non-concurrence, as being himself a trustee, in the complaint of the others, although unable in conscience to offer any opposition to them; "but they refused to do so, on the ground that, as they could not conscientiously join with Edward themselves, they would thereby be deprived, under the provisions of the trust-deed, from having a voice in the election of a future

* Admission to the communion being in the Scotch Church hedged in with many restrictions, it is customary to distribute these "tokens" before every observance of the ordinance, without which no one is admitted to the "fenced" and guarded table.

minister; and also, because it would bring a great accession of friends to Edward"—two hundred new members, according to the same authority, having applied for admission; so they put an arbitrary stop to all the multiplied services with which the Church of Scotland prefaces its communion, and just as the sacred table was about to be spread, silently prohibited that solemn farewell feast, and left the large congregation, with its two hundred new members, to seek what accommodation it could find in the two days which intervened. They found it in a place of which the *Morning Watch* declares, "Nothing could be more repugnant to the judgment, taste, and feeling of all the members, than the asylum to which they were driven. A barn or a cowshed would have been preferable, but none such were to be obtained." This was a large room in Gray's Inn Road, occupied at other times by the well-known Robert Owen, and which was not only desecrated by that association, but too small to hold the large body of Irving's adherents. In this place, however, in that dismal centre of London life, the holy feast was held on the 6th of May, by almost the entire church, about eight hundred communicants; and here, for some months, the more solemn services of the church were celebrated; while Irving preached out of doors in various places, sometimes in Britannia Fields, sometimes in Islington Green, to the multitudes who assembled wherever his presence was known.

Such was the first step he had to make in that new world, outside what his followers call "the splendid towers of Regent Square," outside the ancient circle of companions and counsellors who had deserted him. Of the pangs of that parting he henceforth says not a word; but goes on in sad grandeur, feeling to the depths of his heart all the fulness of the change. Between the church he had founded and watched over as stone upon stone it had grown into being, and round which, in his fond imagination, the venerable *prestige* of the Church of his fathers had always hovered, and the big room in that squalid London street, where foolish-benevolent Unbelief shared the possession with him, and played its frivolous pranks of philanthropy under the same roof which echoed his religious voice, amid all the sneers of the prejudiced world outside—what a difference was there! But after the struggles of the so-called "trial" were over, not a word of complaint or reproach comes to his lips; he proceeds with those "unexampled labours." Multitudes stand hushed before him on those summer days, as on the parched suburban grass, or under the walls of the big prison, he preaches the gospel of

his Master, with an eloquence deeper and richer, a devotion more profound and perfect, than when the greatest in the land crowded to his feet, and all that was most wise and most fair in society listened and thrilled to his prophet voice. But not his now the *prophet* voice; by his side, or in the crowd near him, is some obscure man or woman, to hear whom, when the burst of utterance comes upon them, the great preacher pauses with rapt looks and ear intent; for that utterance, because he believes it to be the voice of God, he has borne "reproach, casting out, deprivation of everything, save life itself," writes one of his female relatives, with aggrieved and pathetic indignation; and there he stands in the unconscious splendour of his humility, offering magnificent thanks when those strange ejaculations give, what he believes a confirmation from heaven, to the word he has been teaching; a sight, if that voice were true, to thrill the universe; a sight, if that voice were false, to make angels weep with utter love and pity; any way, whether true or false, an attitude than which anything more noble and affecting has never been exhibited by man to men.

One of those out-doors sermons was distinguished by a thoroughly characteristic and beautiful incident. It was shortly after his ejection from Regent Square, on a summer Sunday morning, when surrounded by a little band of his own people, and raised in "a temporary pulpit or platform made for his use by one of his flock," Irving was preaching to the dense crowd which had gathered round him. The subject of his discourse was, as the lady from whom I have the information believes, that doctrine of regeneration in baptism with which so many pangs of parental love and anguish were associated in his mind. Suddenly he was interrupted by an appeal from the crowd; a child had been lost in the throng by its parents, and was now held up by the stranger who had extricated it, and who wanted to know what he should do with the forlorn little creature. "Give me the child," said the preacher; and with difficulty, through the multitude, the lost infant was brought to him. "Mr Irving stretched out his arms for it," says my informant, "and in a moment it was nestling (just as we used to see his own little baby do), with the most perfect confidence and contentment, against his broad shoulder. It was a poor child, and poorly clothed, but he was not the man to love it less on that account. We shall none of us ever forget the *wonderful* manner in which Mr Irving could hold an infant. This one appeared to be perfectly happy from the moment it

was in his arms, while he continued to preach with as much ease and freedom as before, and interweaving at once into his discourse (to which it was, of course, most appropriate), our Lord's own lesson about the little children, made this little one as it were the *text* of his last clauses, which he prolonged considerably; when he had concluded, in his final prayer and blessing, he particularly prayed for and blessed 'the little child;' and after the psalm had been sung, he beckoned to the parents, who (as he had intended) had seen it from the time he took it into his arms, to come and receive it back." The affectionate writer goes on, with a little outburst of that loving recollection which brings tears to the eyes and a tremor to the voice of every one who remembers Irving, to say that in his lifetime they "hardly dared to speak or think of those natural gifts which had, previously to his more spiritual ministry, gained for him the praises of the world." But now, at a distance of thirty years, his friends can venture to recall the picture—that figure almost gigantic, with the lost baby "literally cradled" in his arms; the summer heavens blazing above; the breathless crowd below; the solemn harmony of that matchless voice, full of all the intonations of eloquence, to which nobody could listen unmoved; and that living sign of a tenderness which embraced all helpless things, the love with which his forlorn heart, wounded to its depths, yearned to its brethren. "An intense sunshine bathed the whole," concludes the lady, whose notes I have quoted. Under that sunshine, in fervid midsummer, silent thousands stood and listened. This was now the only means remaining to Irving of communication with the outside world.

And in these preachings, with but here and there a scattered individual who retained, or ever had known, allegiance to the Church of Scotland near him—and in the room in Gray's Inn Road—and still more strangely in the chapel where the Rev. Nicholas Armstrong, not long before a clergyman of the English Church, and of fervent Irish blood, established the first dependent congregation of the new sect—one sign of Irving's influence, as remarkable as it is affecting, accompanied the services. So far as the London Presbytery could do it, the great preacher had been cast out of the Church of his fathers—he had been pronounced unfit to occupy any longer a pulpit bound to the Church of Scotland; but wherever Irving's friends and followers sang the praises of God, it was that rugged version of the Psalms of David which we, in Scotland, know from our cradles, and—all poetic considerations out of the question—cherish to our graves,

which ascended from the lips of the unaccustomed crowd. Those rugged measures, by times grand in their simplicity, by times harsh and unmelodious as only translated lyrics can be, which cheered the death-passion of the Covenanter, and which Carlyle, with an almost fantastic loyalty (in rebellion) to the faith that cradled him, puts into the mouths of his mediæval monks, Irving, in actual reality, put into the mouths of his English followers. When his bold disciples interposed their Gospel into the din of every-day life in the heart of London, and preached at Charing-Cross, in the heat of the laborious hours, it was not the smooth hymns of modern piety, but the strange songs of a sterner faith, which mingled with the confused noises of the life-battle. To find those harsh old verses, sometimes thrilling with an heroic touch, but at all times as unlike the effusions of devotion in our days as can well be conceived, preserved amid records of "manifestations" and sermons, upon neither the speakers nor the hearers of which they had the least claim of association, is a singular memorial of the affectionate reverence with which all his followers regarded Irving. I cannot tell how long this lasted;* but in these days of excitement and commotion, when the expelled church had no refuge, but snatched its solemn celebrations in the obnoxious concert-room which Robert Owen shared, and wandered out about those noisy suburbs to find space for its preaching, it is always the old Psalms of Scotland which rise quaint and strange upon the air, used to smoother, if not to nobler, measures. And throughout this summer, there is a continual changing of scene and place. The old green of Islington, swallowed up out of all village semblance in the noisy centre of population, the still less pleasant space overshadowed by Clerkenwell prison, nay, even as we have said, Charing-Cross, which sometimes in insular arrogance we call the centre of the world, all saw the wondering nucleus of devoted worshippers, the gathering crowd, the preaching Evangelist.

Nor was there always the same veneration shown even to the great preacher himself, as in the instance we have quoted. The newspapers of the day mention a threatened assault upon him by the Jews, to whom he had preached in Goodman's Fields; and he himself refers to the presence of "a multitude of strangers and gazers," who "have insulted me, and do insult me daily. While, at the same time, he desires the prayers of

* I am told that their use was continued for several years, until the system of chanting the Psalms in the prose version, as in the Church of England, was adopted.

the Church "for two brethren, now lying in prison," who were suffering for their zeal in this respect. The newspapers, in the mean time, were full of sneers and contemptuous self-congratulations on having foreseen the depths of the "foolery" into which this new fanaticism had fallen; but I cannot help thinking that this summer conveyed, amid the labours that refreshed his soul, a little repose to Irving, who, at last, was done with all the harassing cares of daily contest—the struggle with his friends. It was over now; and if deserted on many sides, he was comparatively unmolested. After the morning services, the worshippers poured into his house, which was still in Judd Place, and which, in that moment of transition, had no certain provision even for its own necessities, and crowded round the breakfast table, where the man who knew how to live by faith, exercised, as Mr Drummond described to me, "a princely hospitality." During the entire summer, the *Morning Watch* informs us, the members of the expelled church had been "indefatigable in seeking to purchase, hire, or build a chapel." None eligible offered for the former purpose, and when it was resolved to erect a building, and money had been collected towards defraying the expense, the Spirit expressly forbade it, saying "that the Lord would provide in His own time." And, in fact, a place adaptable for the purpose was found in the beginning of autumn, in the large picture gallery which had belonged to West, the painter, and which was attached to his house, in Newman Street; where, accordingly, after a little interval, the changed congregation established itself, remodelled and reorganized.

That was a year almost as momentous and exciting to the nation at large as it was to Irving and his people. It was the year of the Reform Bill, and half the periodical literature of the day was awful in prognostications which one reads now-a-days with incredulous smiles; and still more closely interesting and important, it was the year of the cholera, when men's hearts were failing them for fear of the uncomprehended plague, which stole, insidious and sudden, alike through crowded streets and quiet villages. In the June number of the *Morning Watch* appears a letter from Irving, touching an attack of this malady to which he himself had been subject, and the manner in which he had surmounted it—which is remarkable, as all his letters are, for the simple and minute picture it gives of his own heart and emotions.

The idea that disease itself was sin, and that no man with faith in his Lord *ought* to be overpowered by it, was one of the principles which began to be adopted by the newly-separated community.

"To the Editor of the *Morning Watch*.

"My dear Friend,—As you have asked me to give you an account of the gracious dealings of our Heavenly Father with me, His unworthy servant, on the occasion of my being seized with what was in all appearance, and to the conviction of medical men, when described to them, seemed to be that disease which has proved fatal to so many of our fellow-creatures in this and other lands, I sit down to do so with much gratitude of heart to my God, who enabled me to hold fast my confidence in Him, and who did not forsake me when I trusted in Him, nor suffer the adversary to triumph over me, but gave me power, through faith in Christ my risen Head, to overcome him when he endeavoured, by his assault in my flesh, to shake my faith in my God, and to prevent me from fulfilling that day to two different congregations the office of a minister of Christ. . . . I feel I ought to mention that, on the evening preceding my attack, I had preached from the words in the 12th of 1 Cor., 'To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.' I was led in discourse to show out to my flock that the standing of the members of Christ was to be without disease, and that this had ever been the standing of God's people. . . . And I added that if disease did come upon them, as in the case of Job, it was either for chastening for some sin, whether in themselves or in the body of Christ, for God ever views us as one, or permitted as a trial of our faith. Having stated these things out fully, I exhorted the saints of God before me to live by faith continually on Jesus for the body as well as the soul. . . . Or should their faith be put to the test by disease, I entreated them to hold fast their confidence and to plead the Lord's own many and gracious promises to the members of His Church, and in faith to go about the occupations which in His providence they were called to perform, ever bearing in mind that whatsoever they did should be for His glory, and that I had no doubt but they would ever experience that the Lord honoured their faith in His word.

"On the following morning I arose in perfect health, at the usual hour, and was in the church by half-past six o'clock. During the prayer-meeting I began to feel pain, but was able to go through the service. A number of friends accompanied me home to breakfast. On reaching home, I became very chill, and had very severe pain. . . . . After resting awhile I felt a little relieved, and entered the room where my friends were, and sat down by the fire, unable to taste anything. The hour's pain I had endured, and the other trial of my constitution, had even then had such an effect on my frame that my appearance shocked my friends. I could take no interest in the conversation going forward, but endeavoured to lift up my heart to my God, having a presentiment that I was called upon to show forth the faith which I had on the preceding evening been led to exhort my people to have in their heavenly Father. In the strength of God I proceeded, when my friends had finished breakfast, to conduct family worship, which I was enabled to do though my body was so enfeebled that I could neither kneel nor stand, having tried both positions, but had to sit while I prayed. I then retired to my own room, in order to search myself in the presence of God, to confess my sins, to cast myself entirely on the mercy of my Father, and

to seek for strength to perform the duties of that day, having to preach that forenoon at half-past eleven o'clock, and again in the evening at seven. I was now very sick, with a feeling of wringing or gnawing pain through my whole body. . . . I was so weak that I could not sit up, and in sore pain, with a painful chill all over my body. I therefore wrapped me up in blankets and laid me on my bed, desiring to be left alone until a few minutes before the time for setting out for the house of God, where I should minister to His people. My orders were obeyed, and my wish attended to. My wife entered my room about a quarter-past eleven o'clock. I felt so exhausted that I did not attempt to speak to her. She saw my weakness and spoke not, but hurried down-stairs to prepare a little arrowroot and brandy for me, and to desire that my fellow-labourer, the missionary of our church, should go and take my place, as she thought there was little hope of my reaching the church at the hour when the service should commence. When my wife had left the room, though I was no better, I said in the strength of the Lord I will rise and do my duty. I arose, and came down-stairs in tottering weakness, but holding fast my assurance, that though brought very low, the Lord would not forsake me. . . . My sunken eyes and pallid cheeks, and altogether my ghastly appearance, my wife afterwards told me, reminded her of her grandsire of eighty-four, whose frame had been wasted with disease. . . . With slow and difficult steps, accompanied by my wife and a young friend, I proceeded to the Church, about a quarter of a mile from my house; and on entering, found my friend and fellow-labourer standing and ministering in my room. All things tempted me to shrink back from my office; but I felt no hesitation to instruct my faithful beadle, though he remonstrated much, to go up to the pulpit and inform my brother that when he had finished the first prayer I would take my place, and by God's help perform my own duty. Meanwhile, I stretched myself on three chairs before the fire in the vestry, barely able to keep myself in heat, and, by perfect stillness in one position, a little to abate the pain. Ever as I shifted my position I endured much suffering, and was almost involuntarily impelled to draw up my limbs in order to keep the pain under. Nevertheless, when I stood up to attire myself for the pulpit, and went forward to ascend the pulpit stairs, the pains seemed to leave me. Over and over again my kind and true-hearted brother besought me to let him proceed; but my mind was made up to fall at my post, which I had an inward assurance my Master would not suffer me to do. I began to read the chapter, expecting the power of spiritual exposition, which was wont to abound to me in this above all my other services; but to my astonishment I had no thought in my heart, nor word upon my lips, and felt it was all I could do to keep on reading. About the sixth verse my words began to be indistinct in the sound. I could not strike them shrill and full out; they fell short of my usual utterance, all I could do. My eye became dim, and the words of the book looked hazy. Then my head began to swim, and my heart to become faint; and I laid hold on the pulpit-sides and looked wistfully about, wondering what was to befall me. But the most painful symptom of all was that I felt it a great effort to draw my breath. At this moment, when the disease was come to a crisis, and all nature was sinking down within me, I had only one feeling, for the honour of Jesus, my

Lord and Master, that He should be put to shame through my unbelief—and that I should fall before the enemy in the place of testimony and in the sight of all the people. One thought, one prayer, shot across my spirit, which was this, 'Surely Thou, O Jesus, art stronger in my spirit than Satan is in my flesh!' That instant a cold sweat, chill as the hand of death, broke out all over my body, and stood in large drops upon my forehead and hands. From that moment I seemed to be strengthened. My reading, which had not been interrupted by all this, though strongly affected, so as to be sensible to all present, proceeded more easily to the end of the chapter, but all without my being able to add one word of exposition. Nevertheless, after the singing a few stanzas of a Psalm, I undertook to preach on the last verse of the 3rd chapter of John's Gospel, which came in order. According to my custom I had premeditated nothing, and, as hath been said, while reading the chapter found myself utterly incapable of originating anything. But I knew the Master whom I serve, and set out on His charges. Slowly and with great weakness the words dropped from me, and I was ill able to indite sentences or bind them into regular discourse; but I gave myself to the Spirit, and went forward. I had not proceeded many minutes until the Holy Ghost, in one of the prophets, burst in upon my discourse, speaking with tongues and prophesying. This brought me rest and refreshing, and some of the words were made to me spirit and life, so that I resumed with fresh strength; but still as a dead man, both in respect of body and of mind; alive in respect of the Spirit. I continued my discourse for about an hour, with more unction, as it appeared to myself and all who spake of it, than I had ever preached before. After the service, I walked home and conversed with my friends, and took a little simple food: expecting to strengthen my body for my evening duty by eating heartily at dinner. But God was resolved that for this day the glory of my strength should stand only in Him; for I was able to eat little or nothing; yet had more power given me in preaching to about two hundred poor people in a crowded school-room than I ever remember to have had. And next morning I rose to my duty before the sun, and was enabled to go forward with renewed strength unto this hour. For all which let the glory be given to Jehovah by His name,—'I am the Lord God which healeth thee.'

"Edwd Irving."

The perfect simplicity of this narrative may perhaps bring a smile upon some faces: but I cannot pretend to offer any excuses for a man who felt the everlasting arms always under him, and recognized no dull intervening world between himself and his God. The occurrence thus described evidently took place before his expulsion from Regent Square, and at a time when men's minds were highly strung, and as delicate to deal with as the wavering bands of an army in the first thrill of panic, which the merest stumble of the leader might throw into mad rout and destruction. Perhaps the steadfast, pallid figure, holding by the sides of the pulpit, and maintaining its Christian sove-

reigntv over the body and its pangs, did more than much philosophy to strengthen the hearts of the watching multitude against that panic which is the best aid of pestilence.

Notwithstanding Irving's declaration that, according to his custom, he had premeditated nothing, he had by no means given up the composition of sermons; but still, and to the end of his days, continued to dictate to the writing of here and there a joyful amanuensis, honoured to feel her female pen the medium of recording his high thoughts and burning exhortations. Nor does it appear that the "falling off," which is so commonly alleged against him at this agitated period of his life, was in any respect more true than suppositions framed upon general probability generally are. On the contrary, Mr Hamilton, who, deeply affectionate as he was, would not perhaps have been sorry could he have seen a momentary feebleness visible in the brother whose convictions carried him into paths so strange and dangerous, could not say that the bewilderment of the manifestations, or the undue faith with which Irving regarded them, had any effect upon the force and fulness of his preaching. "His ministrations in the pulpit," wrote this trusty witness, dating the 4th of May, "have for some time past been extremely powerful, and I believe instrumental in winning many souls to Christ." Certainly his few printed productions of this period give little sign of any decay of intellect. One of these, published in the *Morning Watch* of March, 1832, entitled, *A Judgment upon the Decisions of the late General Assembly*, contains a very remarkable passage in reference to the future fate of the Church of Scotland, which, uttered without any prophetic pomp, has verified itself more absolutely than any of the professedly inspired predictions to which Irving himself gave such undoubting heed:—"That the General Assembly, Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk Sessions, with all the other furniture of the Church, *are about, like the veil of the temple, to be rent in twain*, or to be left, like the withered fig-tree, fruitless and barren, I firmly believe, and yet would do all I could to retard it," he says; regarding steadfastly, not any premonition of a rising controversy about Church government, nor even the restless, absolute spirit, entering into a wild struggle with all the conditions of nature, which took so readily to deposition and anathema,—but what to his intent eyes was a thousand times more significant, the practical denial of the love of the Father, and the work of the Son, which he believed the Church of Scotland to be guilty of. After the event which has left so deep a scar upon the heart of Scotland, it is startling to meet with such words.

The *Morning Watch*, notwithstanding its dignity as a Quar-

terly Review, and its oft-repeated declaration that the majority of its readers were members of the English Church, occupied itself, throughout those exciting months, in the most singular manner, with the ecclesiastical prosecution, which only the great fame of Irving, and the remarkable character of the spiritual question involved, prevented from being a merely local and individual matter. Though a periodical of the highest class and most recondite pretensions, it palpitated with every change in the fortunes of the Regent Square church, and was as truly the organ of that expelled band, large as a congregation, but small as a community, which followed Irving, as its adversary the *Record* was the organ of English Evangelicism; and not only abounded in discussions and expositions of the miraculous gifts and cures, and of the doctrines specially identified with Irving, but went so much farther as to represent "*Mr Irving's Church as* THE *Sign of the Times*," and to discuss the position of the body in its temporary and disagreeable refuge as "*The Ark of God in the Temple of Dagon.*" Perhaps the presence in the new community of a man so rich, so determined, so swift and self-acting as Henry Drummond, sparing no cost, either of money or labour,—a potentate considerable enough to have an "organ" in his own right,—goes far to explain the possession, by a single Church, of a representative so magnificent as a Quarterly Review.

I am not informed as to the precise period when Irving removed his family into the house in Newman Street, which included under the same roof the large picture gallery, henceforward to form the meeting-place of his Church; but, before going on to that, there occurs another of those anecdotes which his friends have hoarded up in their memories, and tell with tears and smiles. When he went for the first time to see this house, some time elapsed before he could get admission; and when, at last, the man who was in charge of the place opened the door, he apologized for the delay, saying that he had a child dying upstairs. "Then, before we do anything else," said Irving, on the threshold of the much-desired building which might liberate him from Robert Owen and Gray's Inn Road, "let us go and pray that it may be healed." He followed the astonished and sorrowful custodian of the empty house up through the echoing staircase to the attic where the little sick-bed was, and, kneeling down, poured out his soul for the child, over whose feeble head he no doubt pronounced that blessing which dropped from his tender lips upon all little children. Then he returned to the business which had brought him there, and examined the extent and capabilities of the place. Some time after, he re-

turned again with the architect who was to superintend the alterations, and, as soon as the door was opened, asked, How was the child? The father answered with joy that it was now recovering. "Then, before we do anything else, let us go and give thanks," said the Christian priest. Hearing of such daily incidents, natural accompaniments of that full life, one cannot wonder at the exclamation which bursts from the troubled bosom of his sister Elizabeth, when, in a passion of mingled doubt and grief, she says, "There are moments when I feel as if God had deserted the Church altogether; for if He is not in the midst of Mr Irving's family and flock, where is God to be found?" Surely, amid all clouds of human imperfection, the light of His countenance fell fair upon that echoing empty house where his faithful servant gave the thanks of a prince and poet for the little life of the poor housekeeper's child.

He entered into possession of his new church with high expectations; and then, indeed, the ancient, austere usages of the Church of Scotland began to yield to the presence of that gradually rising tide of spiritual influence within. Those utterances, which at first had only conveyed exhortations and warnings to the people of God, had in the hands of Baxter taken an entirely different and much more authoritative character. Up to his time, the prophets, of whom the majority were women, seem only to have given stray gleams of edification, encouragement, and instruction to the believing assembly. Baxter, on the contrary, carried matters with a high hand; he not only interpreted prophecy, but uttered predictions; he fixed the day and the year when the "rapture of the saints" was to take place, in opposition to the sentiments of many of the "gifted;" and if he did not positively assert his own call to be an apostle, at least intimated it with more or less distinctness. Nor was this all; he also declared in "the power," that the Church no longer retained the privilege of ordaining, and that all spiritual offices were henceforth to be filled by the gifted, or by those specially called, through the gifted, by the Spirit of God. Before the opening of the Newman Street church, it is true, the prophet himself had published the wonderful narrative, in which he repeated the predictions which came from his own lips, and appealing to the whole world whether they had been fulfilled, proclaimed them a delusion. But the principle which he had introduced did not fall to the ground, nor did his brother prophets cease to believe in his prophecies. And so it came to pass, that those utterances which had only been expository and exhortative before Baxter's time, after his revelation changed their nature, and gradually mingling details of Church ceremo-

nies and ordinances with their previous devotional and hortatory character, became ere long the oracles of the community—fluctuating sometimes in gusts of painful uncertainty when one prophet rebuked the utterances of another, and reversed his directions, or when conclusions too summary were drawn which had inevitably to be departed from. This new development introduced, instead of the steady certainty of an established law, the unsettled and variable condition naturally resulting from dependence upon a mysterious spiritual authority, which might at any time command an entire change in their proceedings, and was besides liable to be intruded upon by equally mysterious diabolical agencies, which could with difficulty be distinguished from the real influence of the Spirit. When the principle of spiritual ordination was once established, this condition of painful change and fluctuation became inevitable. If it was indeed the Spirit of God which declared the old authority of the Church to be superseded, such an intimation was reasonably to be supposed the preface of spiritual action; and if a power other than the Spirit of God, still more certain was the fruit to be borne by a suggestion which gave scope to every burning imagination and enthusiast heart. New names, new offices, a changed mode of worship, came in gradual succession; when the greater matters were momentarily settled, the minutest details came in for their share; and the very details became important when it was believed that God Himself directed and suggested every arrangement of the new sanctuary.

I do not attempt to follow the gradual development of the "Catholic Apostolic Church." I could not do so without shocking the honest feelings of some of the most excellent people I know, to whom I am indebted for much courtesy and no small assistance. They are very well able to set forth and defend their own faith; and it would be ill my part to cast the faintest shade either of ridicule or of odium upon it. I only pause to point out the moment when the old order of things began to break up and disappear, leaving only here and there some pathetic shred of ancient habitude, such as the use of the Scotch Psalms, to show where the former landmarks had been. In the excitement of the new system thus gradually forming, in the proclamation of apostles about to be consecrated, and prophets about to be sent forth, and a new tabernacle of testimony against the world lying in wickedness to be established in that wilderness—a living tabernacle, every office-bearer of which was intended by God to stand in the place of some one of the symbolical material parts of Moses' tabernacle—it would

have been marvellous, indeed, had the old forms of Scottish worship remained intact amid so many convulsions.

In a sermon preached in Gray's Inn Road, just before entering the new church, Irving thus intimated one or two of the changes proposed:—

"Because I have been sore hindered by the presence of the multitude of strangers and gazers who have profaned the Lord's house, and have insulted me and do insult me daily, and not me only, but the Lord Jesus, it is my purpose, by God's grace, when we meet together again, that the Church shall meet together alone one full hour before the admission of the people, in order that the Church may know what are the duties of the Church, and that we may together confess our sins before the Lord, and humble ourselves before the Lord, and bow ourselves down; and that I may speak to you in the confidence of a pastor, that I may tell you more plainly than in the presence of strangers what be our faults, what be our shortcomings, in order that we may all be before the Lord, to be rebuked of Him accordingly. Then when the service of the Church hath thus been gone about, it is my purpose that the doors be opened, and all whom the Lord shall please to send shall come in, that we may pray for them and minister the word of the Gospel unto them. . . . I hope at no great distance of time also that we shall find it both convenient and desirable to eat the Lord's Supper together, as a Church, every Lord's Day. But, as I said before, I do not wish to press this heavily, nor to enforce anything, but that by the gentle leading of the Spirit of God the Church may be led into it."

The new Church itself bore outward evidence of the change. In a second pamphlet, entitled "Irvingism," much less rare and curious than his "Narrative," and published a year or two later, in which Mr Baxter appears calmed down out of his prophetic passion into the ordinary tone of religious controversy, he describes the place as follows:—"The room adopted for their meetings was fitted up in the usual style of pews and galleries, as in a church; instead of a pulpit, however, there was constructed at the upper end of the church a raised platform, capable of containing perhaps fifty persons. In the ascent to this platform are steps, on the front of the platform are seven seats; the middle seat is that of the angel; the three on each side of the angel are elders. Below them on the steps, and in a parallel line, are seven other seats belonging to the prophets, the middle seat being allotted to Mr Taplin as the chief of the prophets. Still lower in a parallel line are seven other seats appropriated to the deacons, the middle seat being occupied by the chief deacon. This threefold cord of a sevenfold ministry was adopted under direction of the utterance. The angel ordered the service, and the preaching and expound-

ing was generally by the elders in order, the prophets speaking as utterance came upon them." The opening services, however, in this church seem to have been conducted exclusively by Irving, whose sermon, interrupted now and then by a *manifestation*, I have now before me. It was on Wednesday evening, the 24th of October, that this service was held; and the manifestations are reported as they occurred. As an example of these utterances I quote them at length. In the course of his exposition of the 1st chapter of the First Book of Samuel, Irving mentions the Church as barren—"conceiving, but not having brought forth," upon which the ecstatic voice interposes—

"Oh, but she shall be fruitful, oh! oh! oh! she shall replenish the earth! Oh! oh! she shall replenish the earth and subdue it—and subdue it!"

A little further on another, less apposite to the subject of the discourse, breaks in as follows:—

"Oh, you do grieve the Spirit—you do grieve the Spirit! Oh, the body of Jesus is to be sorrowful in spirit! You are to cry to your Father—to cry, to cry in the bitterness of your souls! Oh, it is a mourning, a mourning, a mourning before the Lord—a sighing and crying unto the Lord because of the desolations of Zion—because of the desolations of Zion—because of the desolations of Zion!"

The sermon is on *Reconciliation to God*, and is interrupted by the following "manifestations," in some cases with only a few sentences of the discourse, and in the first two, with only a few words between. Irving is exhorting his hearers to believe that "there is salvation in Christ for every one of you," when the utterance bursts forth by the voice of Mr Drummond—

"Ah, shut Him not out—shut not out your Saviour! Ah, you are proud of your dignity! Ah, truly your power is fearful! Ah, you have a power of resisting your God—you have a power of resisting your salvation! Ah, you are not straitened in your Father; you are straitened in yourselves! Oh, receive Him now! The day is almost closed. Ah, enter now! Delay not—delay not, delay not. Ah, wherefore stand you back?"

Here Irving resumes, "Shut not the Lord out, the Spirit of the Lord speaking in his servants;" when he is immediately interrupted again—

"Oh, I have set before thee—oh, I have set before thee an open door; Oh, let no man shut it—oh, let no man shut it!"

And the following occur at longer intervals; the first uttered by a lady—

"Ah! will ye despise—ah! will ye despise the blood of Jesus? Will ye pass by the cross, the cross of Jesus? Oh! oh! oh! will ye crucify the Lord of glory? will ye put Him to an open shame? He died, He died, He died for you—He died for you! Believe ye, believe ye the Lamb of God! Oh, He was slain, He was slain, and He hath redeemed you—He hath redeemed you—He hath redeemed you—He hath redeemed you with His blood! Oh, the blood, the blood, the blood that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel—which crieth mercy to you now—mercy to you now! Despise not His love—despise not His love—despise not His love!"

"Oh, grieve Him not! Oh, grieve not your Father! Rest in His love! Oh, rejoice in your Father's love! Oh, rejoice in the love of Jesus, in the love of Jesus, oh, for it passeth knowledge! Oh, the length, oh, the breadth, oh, the height, oh, the depth of the love of Jesus! oh, it passeth knowledge! Oh, rejoice in the love of Jesus! Oh sinner! for what, for what, oh sinner, what can separate, separate, separate from the love of Jesus? Oh, nothing, nothing! Oh, none can pluck you out of His hands! Oh, none shall be able to pluck you out of your Father's hand!"

Irving then, the sermon being concluded, intimates that the church is free throughout, no pew-letting being permitted—thus forestalling, as in various other respects, the anxious endeavours of a most important part of the English Church—that it is to be open ten times a-week for public worship, besides four other services to which only the members of the Church are admitted, "with such devout persons as they may introduce by tickets," all others being excluded *except to the porch* of the church. This intimation is scarcely completed, when Mr Drummond's voice again breaks forth:—

"Ah, be ye warned! be ye warned! Ye have been warned. The Lord hath prepared for you a table, but it is a table in the presence of your enemies. Ah, look you well to it! The city shall be builded—ah! every jot, every piece of the edifice. Be faithful each under his load—each under his load; but see that ye build with one hand, and with a weapon in the other. Look to it—look to it. Ye have been warned. Ah! Sanballat, Sanballat, Sanballat; the Horonite, the Moabite, the Ammonite! Ah! confederate, confederate, confederate with the Horonite! Ah, look ye to it, look ye to it!"

The benediction concluded the service.

Thus concluded this singular service. The reader will perceive that there is actually nothing in those exclamations to

which the most orthodox believer could object: but will most probably wonder, as I confess I cannot help doing, why it should have been necessary to interrupt the voice of the preacher for utterances which convey so little, and which to read them in common print and daylight, are not more, but less profound and instructive than the strain of the discourse which pauses to give them place; many of the services, however, are much less frequently interrupted, and some not at all. In one of them occurs a curious instance of the expanded ritual grafted upon the old usage, in a series of short addresses spoken to each individual communicant by name, with which Irving accompanied the distribution of the "tokens;" and in which every man and woman of all those unknown appellations receives a curious identity in all the various particulars of poverty and prosperity, age and youth.

Little further of Irving's personal history appears in this eventful and exciting year. Amid all its agitation, one can fancy a certain repose lighting upon him after the fiery trial with which it began. He was forsaken of his friends, yet love still surrounded him; he had suffered injustice, despite, and loss, but the immediate pangs were over. Already he had been promised the mission of a great prophet to his dear native country, and solace was in the thought; and though Baxter had fallen, there were other prophets standing close around him, who renewed and held up to the continued hope of the Church those predictions which they believed Baxter to have too rashly interpreted, too suddenly desired fruition of—and the sky before the separated community was still bright with glorious hopes.

This momentary calm was, however, once more broken, in October, by warnings of renewed trouble. The Church of Scotland was in no manner called upon to interfere. The scene of his labours was beyond her jurisdiction, and he seems to have had no immediate intention of visiting Scotland, or bringing himself within the reach of her anathema. But, perhaps, it was impossible that any merely human corporation of men, actuated by no greater self-control than their fellows, could have passed over the solemn and indignant *Judgment* pronounced upon their proceedings by Irving, in the *Morning Watch*, without using such means of reprisal as were in their power. The General Assembly of 1831 had issued orders to any Presbytery which might find him ministering within their bounds, to "take action" against him for his heretical views; but, stimulated by assault, it had quickened its movements, and by means of its Commission, a kind of representative committee

nad given orders to the Presbytery which ordained Irving to proceed at once to his trial. The Presbytery of Annan, accordingly, bestirred themselves. They wrote to him, demanding whether he was the author of three tracts which they specified. Under the circumstances, his answer was purely voluntary; but, with his usual candour, he replied at once, with full avowal of the fact, and vehement condemnation of the General Assembly, with which he declared himself able henceforth "to make no relationship but that of open and avowed enmity." The expressions he used on this occasion were almost violent—his vexed spirit, to which no rest was permitted, bursting forth in words more suitable to an Ezekiel than to a man unjustified by inspiration. In his view, the highest court of the Church of Scotland had rejected God in all the threefold character of his revelation—in the love of the Father, the humanity of the Son, and the operations of the Holy Ghost; and his heart burned with a solemn and lofty indignation, all the more intense for the love and reverence with which he had formerly regarded the Church of his fathers.

With this renewed thunderbolt hanging over him, he went through the remainder of the year. "We are all well, and the Lord forbeareth greatly with such unworthy creatures, and aboundeth in love to us for Christ's sake," are the words with which he concludes a letter in December. A certain exhaustion, yet calm of heart, breathes out of the words. Scarcely a man of all those with whom he had been used to take counsel but had fallen aloof, and stood afar off, disapproving, perhaps condemning—and, what was a still harder trial to Irving, calling that which to him was the work of the Holy Ghost, a delusion. But his heart was worn out with much suffering; and, in the interval of conflict, a certain tranquillity, half of weariness, enveloped his troubled life.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1833.

The course of events went on in natural development after the separation of Irving and his little community. To a large extent secluded within themselves, they carried out their newly established principles and "waited upon the Lord," as perhaps

no other community of modern days has ever dreamed of doing, guiding themselves and their ordinances implicitly by the teaching of the oracles in the midst of them. In this career of daily increasing isolation, Irving had not only lost the support of his immediate personal friends in London, but also of those much-loved brethren in faith, in whose defence he had lifted his mighty voice, and for whom he had denounced the Church of Scotland. Mr Scott, though still entertaining the full conviction that miraculous gifts were part of the inheritance of Christians, had totally refused his sanction to the present utterances; and the two friends were now separated to drift further and further apart through all imaginable degrees of unlikeness. Mr Campbell, for whose distinctive views Irving had stood forth so warmly, and whom he had embraced with all the overflowing sympathy and love of his heart, was equally unable to perceive any evidences of Divine inspiration. An impression seems to have prevailed, if not in Irving's mind, at least among several members of his community, that both these gentlemen would naturally fall into their ranks, and add strength and stability to the new Church. I have in my possession notes of a correspondence carried on some time later between Mr Campbell and some members of the Newman Street Church, in which the Scotch minister had to hold his ground against two most acute and powerful opponents—one of whom was Henry Drummond, brilliant and incisive in controversy, as in most other things—and to defend and justify himself for not joining them. To lose the sympathy of these special brethren was very grievous to Irving; and he seized the opportunity of explaining the ground of his faith and that of his people in answer to some questions which Mr Campbell very early in this year addressed to Mr David Ker, one of the deacons in Newman Street, and a member of a well-known family in Greenock, in the immediate neighbourhood of which the "gifts" had first displayed themselves. This letter, which I quote, shows that Irving's own faith had needed very absolute props to support it, and that he had not proceeded so far upon his martyr-path without such trial of doubts and misgivings as could only be quenched by a confidence in his own sincerity and utter trust in God's promise possible to very few men under any circumstances. Once more he reiterated with sorrowful constancy his certain conviction that to His children, when they asked for bread, God would not give a stone.

"14, Newman Street, February 22, 1833.

"My dear Brother,—When our dear David Ker asked me counsel concerning the answering of the questions in your letter, touching the

ground of faith in spiritual utterance, I deemed it best to take the matter in hand for him altogether, and do now hope to deliver the mind of God to you in this matter. The view of the dear brethren in Port-Glasgow,* to wit, the answer of the spirit in the hearer, is the ground of belief in any word spoken by any man or by any spirit; but it is only the basis or ground thereof, and by no means resolves the question in hand. There is a confidence in God which goes far beyond the answer of the spirit, and enables us to walk in the darkness as well as in the light; for His footsteps are not known. This confidence pertaineth to him that is of a pure heart and single eye, and conscious of integrity and clearness in His sight. I believe that this sustained our Lord in the crooked paths wherein God led him, and that it was, and is, and ever will be, the main, yea, the only evidence by which the prophet, having the word of God coming to him, shall know it is the word of God, and as such speak it; by which also the hearer shall know it is the word of God, and as such hear it. It is true that God leadeth men into temptation, as he did Abraham, and then it is their part to obey implicitly the word of the Lord, and the Lord will bring them out of the temptation to His own glory and to their own good. I declare, for myself and for my Church, that this is almost our entire safety, to wit, confidence that our God will take care of us; for we are not a reasoning people, but we seek to be, and I believe are, the servants of God. Moreover we have great faith in the stability of an ordinance. We look up to the deacons, and the elders, and the angel of the Church, as standing in the Lord Jesus, and we expect and desire to see and hear Him in their ministry, and we believe that it will be to us according to our faith, and we have found it to be so in times past. But forasmuch as the voice of the Comforter is the highest of all ordinances in the Church, we steadily believe that the Lord for His own name, as well as for His own end's sake, will not suffer, without a very great cause, any breaking in or breaking out therein; and so, when He openeth the mouth of a brother in power, we expect to hear His voice, and we are not disappointed, and so our experience increaseth our expectation, and in this way we proceed and prosper. In respect of signs, we rather desire them not, than desire them at present, until the word of our God shall have delivered us from our carnal-mindedness, and from following sight instead of faith. When the Lord permitted the enemy to tempt us, seeing our simplicity, He himself delivered us from the temptation, and we learned the more to trust Him and to distrust ourselves. And oh, brother, the fountain which is opened having yielded us nothing but sweet waters, it would be so ungrateful for us to do anything but rejoice in it, that I feel even this letter to be a liberty with my God, which, save for a brother's satisfaction, I would not have ventured to take. There are many things now that I could say, but I refrain, lest I should encourage a temptation in you to speculate about holy things, and so lead you into a snare. I pray God to keep you in the faith of Him, in darkness as in light, and no less when in light than in darkness. Farewell.

"Your faithful brother, EDWARD IRVING."

* Where the "manifestations" first took place: see *ante*, p. 288.

The singular junction in this letter of the ruling "Angel" of the Church, retaining all his natural influence and sway, who "will take good care" that the apostle does bow to his authority—with the simple and absolute believer, confident that he is serving God in utter sincerity, and that God will not deceive him, nor suffer him to be deceived in his unbounded trust, is very remarkable. In this lies the clue which many of Irving's critics have sought in vain, and which some have imagined themselves able to trace to motives which appear in no other manifestation of his heroic and simple soul. While one portion of his friends are affectionately lamenting the blind faith with which he delivers over his understanding to the guidance of the "gifted" —and another are impatiently fretting over the credulity which to their calm sense is inconceivable, this is the attitude in which the object of so many animadversions stands. Vulgar voices outside assail him, the soul of honour, with imputations of imposture and religious fraud; friends, more cruel, suggest sometimes a hectic inclination towards the marvellous—sometimes the half-conscious desire of attracting back again the fashionable crowds of early days. Singularly unlike all these representations he here presents himself. Years before, he had called his brother with him from the Kirkcaldy manse-parlour to join in his prayers for a dying man, in the sublime confidence that "what two of you shall agree together to ask, it shall be done unto them of my Father." Years have not changed his confidence in that unchanging God. He stands gazing with eyes abstracted upon the skies which that burning gaze can all but pierce; he has put his Master to His word; and having done so, the servant of God cannot descend from that mount of prayer to the cool criticism of other men. First in the matter to a mind at all times so exalted, and to which all nature was miraculous, was that Lord to whom he had appealed; as he explains himself from those heights of perpetual prayer, a certain impatience, strangely like the impatience with which the watchers below contemplate him in his incomprehensible simplicity, breathes from his impassioned words, "I am broken in my heart daily with your slowness of faith;" and his explanation is, if anything, more incomprehensible than his acts, to men who, lost in all the complications of a world growing old, can only gaze amazed at that primitive standing-ground on which, as if he had been born in the days of Moses or Abraham, this man of the nineteenth century has found footing. How any man dares believe that he himself is utterly sincere in his asking, and sure of an answer—how any man ventures openly to assume for himself that position to which the Bible calls every

man—and how, dismissing all further question, he can lift his abstracted ear, and give his rapt soul to the infallible reply—is a mystery which nobody can penetrate. Such a position devout men may attain to at the supreme and secret moments of individual life. I can no more explain or comprehend that ineffable primitive elevation than could Irving's curious observers, who saw him standing forth in it, a sign and wonder to the world. But there he *did* stand absolute, in a primitive heroic faith.

And, granting this miraculous postulate, there is, in everything Irving does thereafter, a certain lofty reasonableness which does but still more and more bewilder the minds of his auditors. The region into which he had entered appeared so entirely one beyond reason, that the outside observers expected to find nothing that was not wild and irregular, according to all the traditions of enthusiasm and spiritual excitement, there. But Irving, with his exalted heart, to which no miracle seems too wonderful, keeps, in the midst of all that wild agitation, the limits of God's word and man's nature in utter distinction from such a rash enthusiast as the prophet Baxter, whom even at the height of his inspiration the pastor continually interposes to calm and moderate. When the latter fancies that he has been commanded by God to abandon his family and profession, to appear before the King in "testimony," and to suffer the pains of martyrdom, Irving comes in upon his heated visions with the suggestion, that "if a man provide not for those of his own house he is worse than an infidel"—proving his own declaration, that if in anything the utterances controverted Scripture, he was content that they should "be anathema." Throughout his pleadings before the Presbytery of London, and in the letters I have just quoted, nothing seems so remarkable as this reasonableness, only allowing the truth of the first grand assumption, that the "work" was the work of God. But this reason, governing the actions of a man on such a sublimated level of existence, does only perplex and confuse the more those curious, anxious, interested spectators who might have ventured to hope it was merely temporary delusion, had everything about it been equally wild and irregular—but who were struck dumb by this visionary application, to such a matter, of those rules of trial and experiment common, in the ordinary affairs of life, to all sane and vigorous minds.

The year was little more than begun when Irving had again to enter into direct conflict with his former brethren. The question was changed as well as the scene. Before the hasty and reckless Presbytery of London he had defended himself

against the imputation of having suffered unauthorized persons to speak in his church. The Presbytery of Annan, who had ordained him, now called him to their bar to answer the charge of holding heretical doctrine: viz., the sinfulness of our Lord's humanity. This doctrine, concerning which Irving, at first, wist not that there was any controversy, had by this time created a little controversial literature of its own in the excited theological world—a literature in which that holy and perfect existence, which both parties professed to adore, was made the subject of discussions, always more or less profane, in which both parties forgot, in horror at each other's statements, the reverence and awe which neither statement had, till controversy arose, done anything to impugn. I know nothing more painful, nor, indeed, in some of its phases, more hideous and revolting, than the hot contest, preserved in many scattered publications, fortunately now almost forgotten, which rose over this mysterious and awful subject. From the trials in the Scotch Church courts where ignorant witnesses delivered their opinions on "the hypostatical union," to the revolting physical argument by which some writers of higher pretensions laboured to establish what proportion of its substance a child derived from its mother, the whole discussion is throughout destructive—so far as any external influence can be so—of that tender, profound, and adoring reverence which no man living ever felt more deeply than he who was accused of aiming at its subversion. I do not believe there was any *real* difference whatever between the faith of devout men on the opposite sides of this question. Those who held, with Irving, that our Lord took the flesh of man as He found it, and was our true brother, disowned with horror and indignation the most distant thought that sin ever soiled or breathed upon that holy flesh; and those who believed Him to have come in a certain Eden-fiction of humanity, not so much Holy as Innocent, were, nevertheless, when off this vexing controversy, as ready as any to claim the privilege of Christians, that sympathy of the fellow-sufferer—that tenderest compassion which comes from experiment of all our sorrows and temptations—with which practically every Christian soul knows its Lord invested. The men were fighting in the dark with deadly weapons of those words which confuse and obscure the truth. They were in their hearts at one, both holding a Head absolute in divine holiness and purity, perfect in human fellowship and tenderness;—but the words were external and demonstrative, and the hearts could not make themselves audible in any other than that belligerent human language which does but half express and half conceal every spiritual reality.

So it came about that the Church of Scotland, then so impatient and absolute, and resolute for identity of expression as well as agreement of faith, had to enact another scene in this strange episode of history, and wear with another sharp struggle Irving's sorrowful and troubled soul.

"Edward goes down to Annan to meet the Presbytery, I think on the 12th March. The Lord give him a sound mind!" writes Dr Martin to one of the affectionate and anxious family, who watched all Irving's proceedings with tender curiosity. He went by way of Manchester, from which place, where his only surviving sister still lives, he wrote to his wife of his affectionate meeting with his kindred there—"my dear and precious mother, and my two sisters, and all their children here present"—and took time to remark that "two sweeter children I have not seen," than the little nephew and niece whom he mentions by name. This and the fact that he had dropped the bag of sandwiches prepared for his refreshment on the journey "on the highway for the benefit of some poor one or other—I lost it and grudged not"—is all that is contained, besides his never-failing benediction, in the rapid note of the wayfarer. On the morning of the 13th of March he "arrived at Annan," according to the report of the trial, afterwards published, "by the London mail, and was met by Mr Ker, of London, one of his deacons. A crowd was collected in the street, in expectation of the reverend gentleman's arrival by the mail; and, upon his alighting at the house of his brother-in-law, Mr Dickson, where the coach stopped on its way to the inn, the crowd, which was at that time dispersed in groups, ran eagerly to the spot, to catch a glimpse of their celebrated townsman. In the course of the forenoon, hundreds of individuals of all classes kept pouring into Annan from the neighbourhood; and parties, in vehicles of different descriptions, came in from Dumfries, Carlisle, Longtown, and other neighbouring towns. Twelve o'clock was the hour appointed for the proceedings to commence at the parish church, and by that time the place was literally crammed. It is computed that at least 2000 persons were assembled." Irving was accompanied by Mr Ker, and by the Rev. David Dow, formerly of Irongray, a minister of the Church of Scotland, who had some time before received the "gift of tongues and prophecy."

After the court was constituted, the libel or indictment was read. In this document, which was of great length, Irving was accused of "printing, publishing, and disseminating heresies and heretical doctrines, particularly the doctrine of the fallen state and sinfulness of our Lord's human nature." No evidence of

any kind, except the admission of the accused that he was the author of *The Orthodox and Catholic Doctrine of our Lord's Human Nature; The Day of Pentecost;* and one specified article in the *Morning Watch*, seems to have been considered necessary. A discussion then ensued upon the "relevancy of the libel"—or rather no discussion, for all were agreed, but a statement by each member of the Presbytery, individually, of his opinion. Dr Duncan, the only man among them whose name was ever heard out of Annandale, contented himself with declaring the libel to be "relevant." Two of the members of Presbytery, however, made speeches on the occasion. The first, Mr Sloan, of Dornoch, the hero of many local anecdotes, deplored "the difficulties under which he laboured in rising to combat with one of so great a name as the Reverend Edward Irving—one with whom he was in many respects so unequally yoked—though, notwithstanding that, as the stripling David slew the giant Goliath with a stone from the brook, having gone forth in the strength of the Lord, so he hoped to succeed in proving the heresy of even so great a giant as that reverend gentleman." After a considerable time spent in these preliminaries, Irving was permitted to speak in defence. His speech is throughout a noble and indignant protest against that disingenuous statement of the point at issue, which infallibly prejudged the question, and which no amount of denial or protest could ever induce his opponents to alter. With a warmth and earnestness becoming the importance of the cause, he thus pleaded for a true understanding of his own faith :—

"As to my maintaining that Christ is other than most holy, I do protest that it is not true. It is not true!—before the living God, I do declare it is false. And, though all men should say it is true, I say it is false, and that it proceeds from the father of lies. It has been held up in every pulpit within this land that I have preached and disseminated doctrines inconsistent with the unity of God. Albeit I deny it—I deny it! It is a lie. It has not a shadow of foundation in truth. I would give my life, and, if I had ten thousand lives, I would give them all to maintain the contrary. It is an unjust slander. I never wrote, I never preached, such damnable doctrine; and that all honest men can say. I stand in this place, and say that I am ready to die for it..... I stand here, a witness for the Lord Jesus, to tell men what He did for them; and what He did was this—He took your flesh and made it holy, thereby to make you holy; and therefore he will make every one holy who believes in Him. He came into your battle and trampled under foot Satan, the world, the flesh, yea, all enemies of living men, and He saith to every one, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy.' Do you say that THAT man was unacquainted with grief—that He was unacquainted with the warrings of the flesh? I dare ye to say that the Lord your Saviour had an easier

passage through life than you had. I dare ye to say that His work was a holiday work. Is this your gratitude to the Captain of your salvation? Can you follow in His footsteps, if He did not do the work? . . . (The rev. gentleman then turned to the 40th Psalm, which he proceeded to read and comment upon.) 'I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined his ear, and heard my cry,' &c. But ye say He was never in the pit, nor the clay. But I say HE WAS IN BOTH; and, moreover, that all the water-floods of the Divine wrath passed over Him, and that the Father left Him to mourn with great mourning. . . . The apostles taught out of the Psalms, and not from Confessions of Faith and traditionary documents. But show me the Psalm where it is written that He does not call our sins His own. But was He sinful? No; but look ye, the very reverse of sin inhered in His soul. He suffered because He loved you—and now you dare to say that He loved you not. Be ashamed to this day, ye people! that ye know not more of Him who suffered so much for you. He bore your sin. This broke His heart. . . . . Now, men and brethren, I am here this day to tell you the truth as it is in Jesus."

DR DUNCAN rose and said that it was evident Mr Irving was speaking to the people of his own doctrines, not to the Presbytery in his defence.

MR IRVING: "Oh no, no. Don't prevent me saying what I wish in my defence."

THE MODERATOR said, it seemed to him as if Mr Irving imagined he was in London, preaching to his people there.

MR IRVING: "Oh no, no,—it is not so! I know well where I now stand. I stand in the place where I was born, in the church wherein I was first baptized and then ordained. . . . . Ye ministers, elders, and presbytery! this is no question of scholastic theology. I speak for the sanctification of men. I wish my flock to be holy; and, unless the Lord Jesus has contended with sin, as they are commanded to do, how can they be holy when they follow Him? Can I ask the people to do or suffer more than He did? He is the Captain of their salvation, and I wish them to follow Him! Can a soldier who is sick, wounded, or dead, be expected to follow a leader who is filled with the omnipotence of God? Nay! But if his captain be sick, wounded, and dead, too, may he not ask the soldier to do the like? Now Jesus was sick for us, contended with sinful flesh for us, and hence it is that He can call on us to follow Him in our contendings with sin, our sicknesses, and deaths. Yea, and He does call on us. . . . Ah, was He not holy? Did He not gain for us a victory? Holy in His mother's womb; holy in His childhood; holy in His advancing years; holy in His nativity; holy in His resurrection; and not more holy in one than in another: and He calls upon you to be holy—and this is what He says, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy.' This is my doctrine. . . . . Mock me not by speaking of popularity. The reproaches of a brother are hard to bear. Ye know not what I have suffered; you know not what it is to be severed from a flock you love; to be banished from your house; to be driven from a place of worship in which ye have been honoured, as God's servants, by the tokens of His approbation. Yet, though thus scorned and trampled on, truth is prevailing. You shall not go one half mile in London but you shall see some of our Scottish youth, yea,

and of our English youth also, standing up to preach that truth for which I now appear at this bar. At Charing Cross, at London Bridge, at the Tower, and in all the high places of the city, you shall find them preaching to a perishing people, and, though often hooted and pelted, yet patient withal. And I am sure the day is not far distant when the Evangelist shall go forth and be listened to throughout the land.

"Ministers and elders of the Presbytery of Annan! I stand at your bar by no constraint of man. You could not—no person on earth could—have brought me hither. I am a free man on a free soil, and living beyond your bounds. Neither General Assembly nor Pope has a right to meddle with me. Yea, I know ye have sinned against the Head of the Church, in stretching thus beyond your measure, and this sin ye must repent of. . . . . Is it nothing, think ye, that ye have brought me from my flock of nine hundred souls, besides children, looking up to me for spiritual food? Is it nothing that ye have taken me away from ruling among my apostles and elders, and brought me three hundred miles to stand before you at this bar? . . . . I stand here not by constraint, but willingly. Do what you like. I ask not judgment of you; my judgment is with my God."

I will not attempt to enter into the decision of the Presbytery of Annan, as contained in the speeches delivered, one by one, of its clerical members. The only one reported at any length is that of Dr Duncan, who repeats for the hundredth time those passages which Irving was as ready to quote and adopt as any man, in which the Virgin's child is spoken of as *that holy thing*, and which describe our Lord as "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," and "tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The other men, whose arguments are not recorded, agree one by one. The accused is pronounced to be "guilty as libelled." The Moderator then asks him if he has any objection to state why sentence of deposition should not be passed against him. "Objection! all objection," exclaims the defendant at that strange bar; "I object, not for my own sake, but for the sake of Christ my Lord, whom I serve and honour. I object for your sakes . . . . I object for the Church's sake." "The reverend gentleman," continues the report from which I quote, "again solemnly declared that he did not hold the sinfulness of the human nature of Christ. . . . . and concluded by most earnestly beseeching the Presbytery, as they valued the salvation of their souls, not to pass sentence upon him." Upon which ensued the following singular and exciting scene:—

"The Moderator was then about to proceed to the solemn duty which had devolved upon him, and, as a preliminary, requested Mr

Sloan, the senior member of the Presbytery, to offer up a prayer to Almighty God, when a voice was heard from the pew in which Mr Irving was seated, and which was immediately found to be that of Mr Dow, late minister of Irongray, exclaiming, 'Arise, depart! Arise, depart! flee ye out, flee ye out of her! Ye cannot pray! How can ye pray? How can ye pray to Christ whom ye deny? Ye cannot pray. Depart, depart! flee, flee!' The scene at this moment was singular, and the commotion in the gallery not a little astounding. As there was only one candle in the church, no one, at first, knew whence or from whom the voice proceeded; and it was not till one of the clergymen had lifted the candle and looked peeringly about that he discovered the interjectional words spoken were emitted by Mr Dow. . . . . The assembly, which was very numerous, and had acted in the most becoming manner, now became confused, and Mr Dow rose to leave the house. Mr Irving, who was proceeding to follow his friend, then exclaimed, also with great vehemence, and apparently to the crowd, that somewhat obstructed his passage, 'Stand forth! stand forth! What! will ye not obey the voice of the Holy Ghost? As many as will obey the voice of the Holy Ghost, let them depart.'"

Thus, in the twilight of the March night, through crowds of confused and wondering spectators, who heard that unlooked-for outcry without being able to see whence it proceeded, Irving went forth from the church where he had been baptized and ordained—from the Church of Scotland, the sanctuary of his fathers—never more to enter within walls dedicated to her worship till he entered in silent pomp to wait the resurrection and advent of his Lord. There are, perhaps, few more striking scenes in his life than this in his native church, filled with all those throngs of native friends —old people, who had helped to form his mind—contemporaries of his own, who had watched his wonderful progress with a thrill of pride and amaze; men to whom he had been a brother; wistful women, scarcely able, for awe and pity, to keep the tears within their eyes. From that May-day in which he knelt there before his Master and took his ordination vows—swearing a true faith which he had never broken, a loyal allegiance and service to which he had been true, with the fidelity of a spotless knight—to this bleak afternoon of March, slowly shadowing, minute by minute, upon those clouds of eager faces growing pale in the darkness, what a brilliant interval, what a wonderful difference! Clouds and coming night were now upon the path to which he went forth, commanded by the Holy Ghost: no longer triumph and victory, no second spring of hope—only the reproach that broke his heart—the desertion—the sin, as he held it, of his brethren, for whom he would have given his life. But it was a comfort to his forlorn heart to be sent forth by that

voice which he believed to be the voice of God. The anguish of hearing the sentence of deposition was spared him, and with a pathetic joy he rejoiced over this when he gave his own account of the eventful day.

Left behind in the dark church, with their two thousand tremulous, amazed spectators, and their solitary candle, the Presbytery deposed him from the ministry—took away from him, as far as they could do it, his clerical character, and pronounced him no longer a minister or member of the Church of Scotland; then, after seven hours' sitting, went after him into the darkness, and disappeared henceforth out of all mortal ken—except in Annandale, to be seen no more.

I know few details of his proceedings for some days after this. He preached in various villages in Annandale in the open air to thousands of excited and sympathetic listeners. At Cummertrees—on the Sands of Dumfries—and on a hillside in Terregles, the fair *Terra Ecclesiæ*, through which Nith flows to the sea, his countryfolk gathered to hear him whose voice they were never more to hear again. It was a solemn leave-taking of his native hills and mosses. With an indignation vehement as only grief could make it, he denounced the Church which had cast him out, which had disowned not him, but his Lord, who "came in the flesh"—and preached, with an eloquence more intense and enthralling than ever, Christ's fellowship and love, Christ's coming and glory. Then he took farewell of his kinsfolk, and returned to London, where what I cannot but believe must have been another and an equally hard trial awaited him.* Deposed by his

* Explanations have been sent to me respecting this, which it is perhaps better to give in a note, that my readers may be able to modify for themselves the original statement. In this, as in various other passages, I may, however, explain that I never intended to imply, nor did I believe, that the leaders of the new community had any *intention* of humiliating or thwarting their "Angel." I have described these circumstances as seen from without; Mr Cardale explains them from within, as follows: "The facts are," he says, "misrepresented. Mr Irving's congregation, formed by himself, though based on an old foundation, was Presbyterian—in connection with the Established Church of Scotland. Such as it was in outward form and mode of worship in Regent Square, such it remained without alteration until Mr Irving received apostolical ordination. The sentence of deposition was pronounced at Annan, on the 13th of March . . . He would not, therefore, have returned to London until after Sunday, the 17th. On his return *he resumed all his accustomed duties*, but on a Sunday after his return, which could not have been earlier than the 24th, as he was proceeding to baptize an infant, there was a word spoken to the effect that what the Church of Scotland had given the Church of Scotland could withdraw, and therefore that he should not administer the Sacraments until he had again received ordination. In obedience to what he believed to be God's word, he abstained from administer-

mother Church, he returned to Newman Street, to the little community which, according to ordinary ideas, he himself had originated and brought together, and of which he was supposed to be the ruling influence; and when he arrived there, with his wounded heart, he was received, not with extraordinary honours as a martyr, but with an immediate interdict, in "the power," forbidding him to exercise any priestly function, to administer sacraments, or to assume anything out of the province of a deacon, the lowest office in the newly-formed church. One of his relations writes with affectionate indignation that he was not permitted even to preach, except in those less sacred assemblies in which the outer world of unbelievers were admitted to meet the Church. Such an inconceivable indignity, according to all human rules, did the spiritual authorities, whom his constant and steadfast faith had made masters of his flock, put upon their former leader. No expectation of any such setting aside seems to have been in Irving's mind when he subscribed himself their "faithful pastor and angel over Christ's flock." This, however, was the welcome he received when, sad and weary, he returned from Annan. I have no right to affirm that this was one among the many wounds that went to his heart, for not a syllable of complaint upon the subject ever came from Irving's lips; on the contrary, he describes the whole occurrence in a letter to Mr D. Dow with all his usual quaint minuteness, but without the least appearance of injured feeling, evidently accepting his new position with perfect satisfaction and faith; but he seems to have had no expectation of so extraordinary a proceeding, and it is something entirely unprecedented in the records of religious organizations. Other men have founded sects to rule them; Irving, no founder of a sect, came forth, through repeated anguish and conflict, at the head of his community, only to serve and to obey.

ing Sacraments: but in all other respects he acted as the minister of the congregation just as previously. No one usurped his place, or fulfilled his previous duties, nor did he remain in silence for a day or for an hour. . . . . If either he or his flock had been left in any doubt as to the near approach of his subsequent ordination, I could have thoroughly acquiesced in the opinion expressed as to the effect of the 'Interdict' on Mr Irving's mind. But as the case stands, so far from regarding it as a trial, the probability is that Mr Irving considered the occurrence as putting honour on the Church institutions of Scotland by the acknowledgment of the judicial act, notwithstanding its injustice; and that both he and the congregation regarded it as the fullest pledge that he was about to receive the ordination *which had already been conferred on others*, and to which he most undoubtedly looked with earnest expectation."

Accordingly, those lingering March days glided on through all the oft devotions of the church: the prophets spoke and elders ruled—but in the midst of them Irving waited, listening wistfully if perhaps the voice from heaven might come to restore him to that office which was the vocation of his life. Few of God's servants have been so profoundly tested; and small would have been the wonder had his much-afflicted soul given way under this last unkindness, with which Heaven itself seemed brought in, to give a climax to man's ingratitude. At last, while he sat in the lowest place, and waited with a humbleness to which I know no parallel—strangest and most touching proof of that sincerity to which, in the sight of God, he might well appeal—the "utterance" once more called the forlorn but dauntless warrior to take up his arms. By "the concurrent action in manifested supernatural power both of prophet and apostle, he was called and ordained angel or chief pastor of the flock assembled in Newman Street," says the authorized "Chronicle" of that church. The sacred office, in which he had laboured for so many wonderful years, and won such usury of his Master's grand deposit—that office, in which for so many sorrowful days his surprised soul had been stopped short and put aside—was restored to him by the apostolic hands of Mr Cardale, at the command of one of the ecstatic speakers. And Irving accepted that re-ordination: he, upon whose devoted head no gifts of inspiration descended, and for whose deliverance no miracles were wrought—standing alone in the eminence of nature, among men, none of whom on any but this supernatural ground could ever have reached his side—stooped to the touch of the new apostle, and took back the ministry which, through many a long year, God Himself had sealed in the saving of souls. Not Ezekiel, when that prophet stood tearless, forbidden to weep, and saw the desire of his eyes buried out of his sight, was a more perfect sign to his generation than this loyal, humble, uncompensated soul.

Meanwhile domestic anxiety once more came in to heighten his other troubles, and the youngest of his children fell ill. "His mother said that the Lord had punished their child for their sin," writes Mrs Hamilton, in April, "which sin, I think, they conceive specially to be Edward's having remained in Scotland, after meeting with the Presbytery," an error for which, she proceeds to say, he was sharply rebuked in the church, after he returned. But, whether or not the ailing infant bore this burden, it is certain that its life was waning; and another bereavement fell immediately,

as intimated in the following letter to Dr Martin, upon the much suffering house:

"14, Newman Street, April 23, 1833.

"My dear Father,—The Lord, in His severity and His goodness, hath been pleased to chastise us for our sin and the sins of the flock by removing from us our darling Ebenezer, who seemed, like Edward, a child of God from his mother's womb; for, surely, during the months of his life, he never showed anything which might not become a child of God; and when, in faith, I addressed words of godliness to nourish the seed of faith which was in him, his patient heed was wonderful. We are much comforted of our heavenly Father, and of our dear flock, under all our trials. Peace be with you. Farewell!

"Your loving and dutiful son,

"Edward Irving."

I cannot undertake to account for the sublime unreason of this man, who, *in faith*, addresses *words of godliness* to the dying infant. Perhaps it may want small apology to those who, like myself, have seen that solemnity of death shadowing over a baby-face, of which this "patient heed" gives but too pathetic and affecting a picture. But he had long believed in the possibility of infant faith,—a point to which Coleridge refers, in the *Aids to Reflection*, as one which he will not reply to "honoured Irving" upon, without careful consideration of the whole question. This article of faith, which may look fantastic enough to cool spectators, the father of those dead children has bequeathed to his Church, which, I believe, gives children a share in some of its most solemn services. Limits of human possibility were never in Irving's heart; he could not understand the existence of any soul debarred from communication with that Lord of life in whom he had his being; it was easier far to believe that the little intelligence which yet had not dawned into human expression, was, in an intercourse even more close than his own, hidden with Christ in God.

It is strange to turn from this passion and agony of human life, so heavily overcast by the sorrows sent of God, and the vexations imposed by man, to glance at what the outer world was saying, and what miraculous uncomprehension existed in the minds of many who came to gaze at the wonders in Newman Street. I do not know who the American, Dr Addison Alexander, may have been, but I am told he was a man of some note in his own country. He was in Irving's church on the 10th May, 1833, and sent an account of what he saw there to the New York papers. With American detail, he describes the man, the church, and the service—which he

thought "extremely well contrived for scenic effect;" then added his impression of the demeanour of the preacher. "Dr Cox and I," said the self-important Transatlantic spectator, "flatter ourselves that he observed and preached at us. I saw him peeping through his fingers several times, and I suppose he was not gratified to see us gazing steadfastly at him all the time, for he took occasion to tell the people that it would profit them nothing without the circumcision of the ear." This was the tone assumed, not by travelling Americans alone, but by all the general public, which imagined itself too enlightened to be deceived by any spiritual manifestations. It was a juggle which was supposed to be going on before those keen observers; and the heroic sufferer, who stood upon that platform before them, with the heart breaking in his generous and tender breast, was the chief trickster of the company, and was supposed to cast jealous eyes upon any curious stranger who might "gaze" too "steadfastly," and, perhaps, find out the secret of the imposture. In sight of such amazing misconception, miracles themselves lose their wonder; nothing is so wonderful as the blindness of those human eyes, which, "gazing steadfastly" do but demonstrate their own total incapacity to see.

During this summer considerable accessions were made to the separated community. An Independent congregation in the city, presided over by Mr Miller, having gone through the same process which had taken place in Regent Square, attached itself to the new church, its minister being also reordained angel over it—and the ecstatic voices began to be heard in the Church of England, from which they also ended by detaching at least one clergyman in London. The most singular proof, however, of the advance and development of the community, is to be found in the winding up of the *Morning Watch*, and the very remarkable reasons assigned for the ending of that strange periodical, the history of which breaks in like an episode of pure romance into the duller records of ordinary literature. Commenced, at first, to afford a medium by which the consultations and conclusions of the Albury School of Prophets might be brought before the public, it had faithfully followed all the gradual expansions of the new Spiritualism. Vague but grand expectations had been in the heart of its originators. They believed the Lord to be at hand—the world's history to be all but concluded. The night was over, the day breaking, when Henry Drummond and his brother seers set their Morning Watch upon the battlements, that the sentinels might communicate to

each other how the shadows dispersed, and the gleams of coming sunshine trembled from the east. Now a strange fruition was coming to those hopes. Not the Lord, indeed —for the gates of heaven still closed serenely in azure calm upon the far celestial glory—but a Church, with all its orders of ministers, called by direct inspiration, a spiritual tabernacle, constituted by God himself, had been revealed to their faith; and all that close band of true believers stood breathless with expectation, each man listening whether, perhaps, his name might not be the next upon the prophetic roll. One by one the sentinels thus summoned dropped into other offices; and at last it became necessary for their leader to make the following announcement—such an intimation as, I presume, no editor of a periodical ever made before since literature was:—

"The followers of Christ and the followers of Antichrist are now gathering; each is now requiring, not merely the nominal but the personal services of their respective adherents; Christ is gathering His children into the true Church, to do Him service there, and, in so doing, to be prepared for His coming; Satan is gathering his hosts under the standard of Liberalism to become the pioneers of that 'wicked one, that man of sin, the son of perdition,' the personal Antichrist.

"In the progress of this work, of gathering and preparing His followers, Christ, for some months past, hath been calling for the personal services of nearly all the regular correspondents of this journal, one after another; and He hath at length called the editor to take the place of an elder in His Church, and hath claimed all his time and services for the special duties of feeding and overseeing a sixth part of the flock of Christ in London. To this higher calling the editor now resolves to devote himself wholly, and at the same time brings the *Morning Watch* to a close, as he will not transfer to any other person such a solemn responsibility."

This singular periodical, a phenomenon in literature, came to a conclusion in June, 1833. The March number contained several papers of Irving's, and in particular a most striking reply to Baxter's narrative—as eloquent an address as one man ever made to another, for it is almost entirely a personal appeal. When the *Morning Watch* ceased to afford him a means of communicating his thoughts to the public, Irving wrote no more. The only productions of his pen thereafter, except the sermons which he still continued to dictate wherever he found an amanuensis, were now and then a pastoral letter. His intercourse with the world, so far as literature was concerned, had now terminated. In every way, that intercourse grew less and less. He no longer went abroad to preach those open-air sermons, to which, in

the previous year, thousands listened. Events drew closer the circle of fate; more and more he became isolated in that little world, guided by the ecstatic utterance, where daily development was taking place. Darkly it appears, through the formal records of the official *Chronicle*, that revolutions were being accomplished there, in which his devoted soul acquiesced painfully and with difficulty. He had to be instructed even in that new office of Angel, which at first, I read in the *Chronicle*, he did not understand to be "anything more than a Presbyterian minister." He had to reconcile himself to the newly-bestowed spiritual functions—much more wide than those which belonged to the same offices in the Church of Scotland—of the elders and deacons, which, as the same authority informs us, he "had not the least conception of," and, at first, entertained "the utmost repugnance to." He had to learn, besides, that "after the apostolic office had been brought out," it was no longer his part to draw conclusions from the prophecies, or to follow their guidance upon his own authority, "and so contrary," we are informed, "was it to his views and practice" to await the apostle's decision upon these matters, "that he still continued to judge and act upon words spoken in his flock, whereby great trouble and perplexity were occasioned both to himself and his people." It is added, however, that "he at length perceived his error" in all these particulars; yet, through the haze which envelopes the early growth of so exclusive a body, and through all the personal affection which surrounds Irving himself, it is plain to see, by glimpses, that this great, real, natural soul was again sadly in the way of those rapidly-growing new conventionalities to which only the conviction that they were ordained by God, could make him bow his head; and was once more an embarrassing presence to the lesser men around, who knew not how to adapt their vestments to the limbs of a giant. From that dim world no more letters come forth to tell us how it is with him in his own sincere and unconcealable spirit; but when, now and then, for a moment, some other hand puts back the curtain, the picture is sad and full of trouble. His reason and his heart struggle against those bonds; but still he submits—always submits, bowing his lofty sorrowful head, on which anguish and conflict have scattered premature snows, under the yoke. Throughout the *Chronicle* and other publications put forth by the community, this great figure looms always with formal acknowledgments made of its greatness, often with natural outbursts of affection celebrating its nobility,

but, nevertheless, with a certain unexpressed disapprobation visibly mingling with all praise. Even the apostles and prophets are puzzled how to manage a soul so heroically simple, a heart so warm. They are tender of his repugnances and reluctances, but cannot understand how it is that their restraints irk him. And so it is that his days, which are numbered, glide on out of sight of the world. Outside, people imagine him the leader, who has brought and keeps this congregation together, and by right of whose permission prophets speak and elders teach; but in reality, when one looks within, the scene is very different. The apostles and prophets have patience with him when the light breaks slowly, painfully, upon his troubled soul; and, mastering all the prejudices of his life, all the impulses of his will, this martyr, into whose lingering agony nobody enters, still bends his head and obeys.

A single example of this, contained in a letter from his brother-in-law, the Rev. J. Brodie, of Monimail, I may instance. The Communion was being celebrated in the Newman Street Church one Sunday in June, and Mr Brodie, then in London on a visit, was present:—

"After praise and prayer, he (Irving) proceeded to dispense the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and pointed out the character of those who were invited to approach, and of those who were unworthy. While he was doing this, one of the apostles exclaimed: 'And if there be any one who does not acknowledge that the Spirit of God is amongst us, if there be any one that doubts the work of the Lord, let him abstain; let the unbeliever depart.' . . . . Next forenoon, Mr Irving came to call for me. I very readily expressed my belief that not a few of those who belonged to his congregation were true believers in the Saviour; when he asked me, 'Why, then, did you not come and join with us at our Communion?' I replied, 'Even if I had desired to do so, how could I, after having heard it so plainly stated that all who doubted as to the nature of those manifestations were commanded to abstain?' He paused a moment, and then said, 'Ah, yes, the Spirit hath so enjoined us.' I saw that it was not without a struggle that he gave up the liberal and truly catholic feeling by which he had formerly been led to regard all true believers as brethren."

How many of such groans burst out of Irving's labouring heart is known only to the Divine Confidant of all his sorrows. The grieved and anxious brother who records this incident plied him inevitably once more with argument and appeal, representing that "these manifestations were the effects of excited imagination." In the midst of the harder sacrifices by which he had now to prove his devotion, the sufferer's constancy and patience had again and yet again to

go through this trial. He was still remonstrated with about that belief which was bringing upon him internal struggles more severe than any man knew of; and still he held to that only ground on which he could sustain himself, in forlorn but sublime confidence—the conviction that he had asked sincerely, and that God had answered. But God's ways were dark to His all-trusting servant—"His footsteps are not known."

Notwithstanding these difficulties, however, a profound expectation still moved the community in Newman Street, and kept hope and strength in the breast of Irving. The details of the living tabernacle were not all that he looked for from heaven. The baptism by fire was yet to come, and apostolic gifts, more marked and distinctive than the supernatural impulses which moved Mr Cardale to confer ordination were promised to the faith of the Church.

The remainder of the year was spent in expectant yet sad suspense, waiting for "power from on high," and, when it did not come, groaning in heart over that want of faith which presented "a let and hindrance to God's work," within the isolated circle of the Church in Newman Street. Of that silent conflict which Irving had now to wage with himself, last and perhaps sorest of his trials, there remains no record except the scanty intimations in the *Chronicle* of the reluctance with which he received various particulars of the new order of things. But "light broke in upon his mind," always at last—he "confessed his error;"—and so struggled onward on his sorrowful path, more and more wistfully conscious that God's footsteps are not known.

CHAPTER XIX

1834—THE END.

THE last year of Irving's life opened dimly in the same secluded, separated world, within which Providence had abstracted him after his re-ordination. He had not failed in any of the generous and liberal sympathies of his nature; his heart was still open to his old friends, and responded warmly to all appeals of affection; but the life of a man who prayed and waited daily, "yea, many times a day," for the

descent of that "power from on high" which was to vindicate his faith and confirm his heart, was naturally a separated life, incapable of common communion with the unbelieving world. And he had paused in those "unexampled labours," which, up to the settlement of his Church in Newman Street, kept the healthful daylight and open air about him. At the end of the year 1832 he and his evangelists had ceased their missionary labours; henceforward nothing but the platform in Newman Street, and the care of a flock to which he was no longer the exclusive ministrant, occupied the intelligence which had hitherto rejoiced in almost unlimited labour. Whether there was any new compensation of work in the new office of the Angel I cannot tell; but nothing of the kind is apparent. He was not ill, as far as appears, during the early part of this silent and sad winter; but he was deprived of the toil which had hitherto kept his mind in balance, and of that communication with the world which was breath to his brotherly and liberal soul. No man in the world could be less fitted for the life of a recluse than he; yet such a life he seems to have now led, his span of labour daily circumscribed as the different "orders of ministries" in the new Church developed, and no missionary exertion, or new work of any kind, coming in to make up to the mighty activity, always heretofore so hungry of work, for this sudden pause in the current of his life.

In January, however, he was sent on a mission to Edinburgh, where a Church had been established under the ministry of Mr Tait, formerly of the College Church. This little community had been troubled by the "entrance of an evil spirit, from which, in all its deadening effects, his experience in dealing with spiritual persons would, it was hoped, be efficacious, by the blessing of God, in delivering them." He seems to have remained but a very short time, and to have occupied himself exclusively with his mission. "During the week of his residence in Edinburgh at that time, he was occupied day and night in public service and private visitation," writes one of the chief office-bearers in that place, "he so discoursed of God's truth and doctrine in all the firmness of authority and yet gentleness, that he was the means whereby that flock was recovered, strengthened, and comforted." Though the Edinburgh public, in much greater numbers than could gain admittance, crowded to the place of meeting where Mr Tait and his congregation had found shelter, the great preacher no longer called them forth at dawn to dispense his liberal riches, nor rushed into the

chivalrous, disinterested labour of his former missions to Edinburgh. Wonderful change had come upon that ever-free messenger of truth. He came now, not on his own generous impulse, but with his instructions in his hand. Always a servant of God, seeking to know His supreme will and to do it, he was now a servant of the Church, bound to minute obedience.

This change is strangely apparent in the few fragments of letters written during this visit, which I have only seen since the publication of the first edition of this book. They contain no additional facts, nor any details of importance, but throw another gleam of melancholy and strange light upon the altered circumstances of the man. Yet not melancholy, so far as his own consciousness is concerned; for it is with thankfulness he describes a condition which to the outside spectator looks so much like bondage. "This day has been most blessed to us all," he writes, on Sunday evening, the 2nd February. "The Church met at ten o'clock, and while I was in doubt what to teach, the Lord, before the service began, opened the mouth of the prophet to encourage the flock to bow their understandings, and guide me to teach the manner of God's worship, of the holy race, and the altar, which I did forenoon and afternoon, with greater presence and power of teaching than I ever felt. . . . In the evening the power came upon the prophet to direct me to Ezekiel xxxvii., which I chose of myself, and had power to minister it, marvellous to myself." A few days later he writes in evident weariness:—"Ofttimes I would long to be in London, if I were not upon my Master's business. Oh, it is a weary and laborious service! I say not pray for me, because I know well, yea, and feel well, how I am remembered by you all." "I feel as if this week would bring my labours to an end here," he concludes on the 9th of February. "Whether the Lord hath anything more for me at present in Scotland, I wait to see; but surely by His grace I will go after none unless it come seeking me, and I will not go to it, except it be within the bounds of my commission. I am conscious of coming greatly short, and yet of greatly strengthening this flock, and of depositing the seeds of precious truth. It is very laborious, but I trust the Lord will strengthen me." It is needless to point out the wonderful difference between this limited and restrained mission and the exuberant labours and triumphs of his former visits to Scotland. He was now "in subjection," as he himself says, and bore the yoke with his usual loyalty and humbleness.

Some time after, Mrs Irving wrote to her mother, that "Edward was truly grieved that it was not in his power to go to see you, but his time is truly not his own, neither is he his own master." From this mission he returned very ill, with threatenings of disease in his chest; and, though he rallied and partially recovered, it soon became apparent that his wearied frame and broken heart were unable to strive longer with the griefs and disappointments which encompassed him, and that the chill of this wintry journey had brought about a beginning of the end.

A month after Irving's visit to Edinburgh, the apostles, of whom there were now two, Mr Cardale and Mr Drummond, proceeded there to ordain the angel over that Church, and from Edinburgh visiting several other towns in Scotland, were some time absent from the central Church. During that interval, a command was given "in the power," in Newman Street, to which Irving gave immediate obedience. It concerned, I think, the appointment of a certain number of evangelists. After this step had been taken, the absent apostles heard of it, and wrote, declaring the new arrangement to be a delusion, and rebuking both prophet and angel. The rebuked prophet withdrew for a time in anger; the angel bowed his loftier head, read the letter to the Church, and confessed his error. Thus, amid confusions, disappointments —long lingering of the promised power from on high—sad substitutions of morsels of ceremonial and church arrangement for the greater gifts for which his soul thirsted—the last spring that he was ever to see on earth dawned upon Irving. As it advanced, his friends began to write to each other again with growing anxiety and dread; his sister-in-law, Elizabeth, describing with alarm "the lassitude he exhibits at all times," and bitterly complaining that he had neither time nor possibility of resting, surrounded as he was by the close pressure of that exclusive community, "the members of his flock visiting him every forenoon from 11 to 1 o'clock," and the anxieties of all the Church upon his head. Kind people belonging to the Church itself interposed to carry him away, in his exhaustion, on the Monday mornings, to rest in houses which could be barricaded against the world—a thing which, in Edward Irving's house, in the mystic precincts of that Church in Newman Street, was simply impossible; and, when he had been thus abstracted by friendly importunity, describe him as stretched on a sofa, in the languor of his fatigued and failing strength, looking out upon the budding trees, but still in that leisure and lassitude

turning his mind to the work for which his frame was no longer capable, dictating to some ready daughter or sister of the house. As he thus composed, it was his wont to pause, whenever any expression or thought had come from him which his amanuensis could have any difficulty about, to explain and illustrate his meaning to her favoured ear,—neither weakness, nor sorrow, nor the hard usage of men being able to warp him out of that tender courtesy which belonged to his nature.

In this calm of exhaustion the early part of the year passed slowly. He still preached as usual, and was at the command of all his people, but appeared nowhere out of their close ranks. In July, he wrote a letter, characteristically minute in all its details, to Dr Martin, bidding him "give thanks with me unto the Lord for the preservation of your daughter and my dear wife from an attack of the cholera," and relating the means which had been effectual in her recovery.

This is the only glimpse which I can find of him till he reappears finally in September, in all his old individual distinctness, softened by his weak bodily condition, with a grave gentleness and dignity, and the peace of exhaustion breathing in everything he does and says. He had been by "the power" commissioned, as a prophet to Scotland, to do a great work in his native land some time before. The explanation given by his alarmed and disapproving relatives of his journey is that the time had now arrived for that great work, and that he was authoritatively commanded to go forth and do it. The representatives of the Church in Newman Street, however, do not admit this. "It was not without remonstrance on the part of many," but "we were met by the suggestion that it was his native air," writes an influential member of the community. They yielded, however, to his own wish, which was to wander slowly through the country, wending his way by degrees to Scotland, with the hope of gaining strength, as well as doing the Lord's work, by the way. He had been warned by his doctor that the only safe thing for him, in the condition of health he was in, was to spend the winter in a milder climate; and when, notwithstanding this advice, his anxious friends saw him turn his face, in the waning autumnal days, towards the wintry north instead, it is not wonderful that they should add the blame of this to all the other wrongs against his honour and happiness of which they held the prophets of Newman Street guilty. However that may be, it is apparent that the spiritual authorities of his own Church, perhaps aware that no induce-

ment would lead him to seek health, for its own sole sake, in any kind of relaxation, finally gave their full countenance to the journey upon which he now set out in confidence and hope.

It is singular, however, to note how, as soon as he emerges from his seclusion in Newman Street, he regains his natural rank in a world which always had recognized the simple grandeur of his character. Away from that Church, where he rules, indeed, but must not judge, nor act upon even the utterances from heaven, except on another man's authority —where he is censured sometimes and rebuked, and where his presence is already an unacknowledged embarrassment, preventing or at least hindering the development of all its new institutions—the free air of heaven once more expands his forlorn bosom. In the rural places where he goes there is no man "worthy" who does not throw open his doors to that honoured guest, whose greatness, all subdued and chastened by his weakness, returns to him as he travels. Once more his fame encircles him as he rides alone through the unknown country. It is Edward Irving, of tender catholic heart, a brother to all Christians, whose thoughts, as he has poured them forth for ten eventful years, have quickened other thoughts over all the nation, and brought him many a disciple and many a friend in the unknown depths of England, and not merely the Angel of the new Church, who goes softly in his languor and feebleness to the banks of the Severn and the Wye. I cannot but think that the leaders of the community must have felt—to judge by the sentiment which is apparent in their publications—a certain relief,* perhaps unconscious to themselves, when he left them: he whom it was impossible not to be tender of, but whose enlightenment was slower and more difficult than they could have desired; and for himself I cannot doubt that the relief was even greater. He had escaped away to the society of his Lord—to the silent rural ways, where no excitement disturbed the musing of his soul; to the company of good men, who were not disposed to argue with him,

* I have to explain again, and repeat it earnestly, that I believe this feeling to have been unconscious to a great extent, and entirely unexpressed—such a tacit unacknowledged sentiment as arises sometimes between those most closely bound to each other, when with love and union unimpaired they are unable for the moment to see "eye to eye." I regret that the statement should have given pain to any of those who in living and dying were Irving's closest friends and brethren; but I cannot retract it further than by this explanation of my meaning. It implies no contention or usurpation of his rights.

whom, unconsciously, he had helped and enlightened in the liberal and princely years that were past. So he left London and the battle-field, never more to enter those painful lists, nor be lost amidst the smoke of that conflict—and went forth, in simple dignity, to a work less hard than he dreamed of, unwitting to himself, leaving his passion and anguish behind him, and turning his fated steps towards the hills with no harder thing on hand than to die.

He left London without any apparent presentiment that this parting was the last, and gave his final benediction to the children whom in this world he was to see no more. They were three whom he thus left fatherless: one only, the Maggie of his letters, old enough to understand or remember her father; the youngest an infant a few months old. The first point in his journey was Birmingham, from whence he begins his letters to his anxious wife; the next is Blymhill, near Shiffnel, where he describes himself to have arrived, "bearing the hand of the Lord upon me, yet careful enough and contented enough," and where his friends find him a horse on which to pursue his way. On the 6th of September, still lingering at this place, "visiting the brethren," which he speaks of as "strengthening and fitting me for the journey," he tells his Isabella that "the Lord deals very tenderly with me, and I think I grow in health and strength. What I could not get in London or Birmingham," he adds, with quaint homeliness, "I found lying for me here—the gift of Mr Cowper, of Bridgenorth, a sort of *trotcosie* of silk oilcloth, which will take in both hat, and shoulders, and cheeks, and neck, and breast. I saw the hand of Providence in this." Here he is troubled by his own inadvertence in having dated a check, which he gave in payment for his horse, "London—little thinking that this was a trick to save a stamp. I am very sorry for this, but I did it in pure ignorance." Next day he is at Bridgenorth, in trouble about his little boy, who is ailing, and on whose behalf he directs his wife to appeal to the elders for such a visitation as had been, according to his belief, so effectual in her own case. "Ask them to come in after the evening service, when I shall separate myself to the Lord with them," says the absent father, whose heart is with his children, and who, after many anxious counsels about the little four-year-old boy, sends a message to tell him that "the horse is brown, with black legs." Next day he resumes: "I did separate myself, according to my promise, and was much distressed by the heavy and incessant judgments of the Lord, and afterwards I had faith to plead the

promise that the prayer of faith should heal the sick." "This Bridgenorth is one of the most beautifully-situated towns I ever saw," he continues, and proceeds to describe the route which he meant to adopt, to his wife. After recording the expenses to which his horse and saddle had put him, he adds: "But no matter—I feel that I am serving the Lord daily, and I think He daily giveth me more strength to serve Him." On the 10th of September he is again at Blymhill, where he lingers to receive the visits of some brethren in the neighbourhood, and to prove his horse, "which goes well." The friends who detain him in this quarter seem to be the clergymen of the place. "I am greatly pleased and comforted," he says, "by all that I [hear] about Henry Dalton's two flocks, and have no doubt that the pleasure of the Lord is prospering in his hands; nor am I less pleased here with Mr Brydgeman, whose labours for the Lord are very abundant." From Blymhill he also writes to Mr Hamilton, committing into his hands the management of his business affairs with his former publishers; a commission which he introduces by the following affecting preface:—

"My dear Brother Hamilton,—Although we have parted company in the way for a season, being well assured of the sincerity and honesty of your mind, and praying always that you may be kept from the formality of the world in divine things, I do fondly hope that we shall meet together in the end, and go hand in hand, as we have done in the service of God. And this not for you only, but for your excellent wife, whose debtor I am many ways. On this account, I have always continued to take your counsel and help in all my worldly matters, as in former times, though God, in His goodness, hath given me so many deacons and under-deacons worthy of all confidence. But I cannot forget, and never will, the assiduous kindness with which you have, ever since I knew you, helped me with your sound judgment and discretion in all temporal things; and sure am I that I should be glad as ever to give you my help in spiritual things as heretofore. I could not, without these expressions of my hearty, faithful attachment to you, and of my grateful obligations for all your past kindness, introduce the business upon which I am now to seek your help."

All the literary business in which Irving was now concerned seems to have been the settlement of his accounts with his publishers. Some balances appear to have been owing him. But I have been told, I cannot say with what truth, that he derived little pecuniary advantage, at any time, even from his most popular publications.

A few days later, he writes the following descriptive letter to his children:—

"Ironbridge, Shropshire, 16th September, 1834.

"My dear Children, Margaret and Martin,—This place from which I write you is named Ironbridge, because there is a great bridge of iron, which, with one arch, spans across the river Severn, and there is another, about two miles farther up the river, where there are the ruins of an ancient Abbey, in which men and women that feared God used, in old times, to live and worship Him. The walls of the ruin are all grown over with ivy. Your father stopped his horse to look at them; and six miles farther back there was an old grey ruined wall in a field, which a smith by the road-side told me was the ruins of an ancient Roman city, named Uriconium, which once stood there . . . . . Your father has ridden from Shrewsbury this morning, where he parted with his dear friend, the Honourable and Reverend Henry Brydgeman, who is a very godly man, and has been wonderfully kind to your father. He has six sons and only one daughter, all little children, the eldest not so big as Margaret; and I am writing to Bridgenorth to another dear friend, the Rev. Henry Dalton, who has no children yet. You must pray for both these ministers, and thank God for putting it into their heads to be so good to your father.

"Now, concerning the house and the oak-tree in which the King was hidden and saved. There have been eight Kings since his time and one Queen—Queen Anne, whose statue is before St Paul's Church, in London. This King's name was Charles, and his father's name was Charles, and therefore they called him Charles the Second. The people rose up against his father, and warred against him till they took him, and then cut off his head at Whitehall, in London; and his poor son they pursued, to take him and kill him also, and he was forced to flee away and hide himself, as King David did hide himself. The house is only three miles from Mr Brydgeman's, so we mounted our horses and away we rode—Mr Brydgeman in the middle—till we came to a gate which led us into a park, and soon we came to another gate, which opened and let us into the stable yard, and there we dismounted from our horses. . . . The master of the house and his family were gone, and there were none but a nice, tidy, kind woman, who took us through the kitchen into an ancient parlour all done round the walls with carved oak, just as it was when the King hid himself in the house. And there was a picture of the King. Then we went upstairs into an ancient bedroom, whose floor was sore worn with age, and by the side of this bedroom was a door leading into a little, little room, and the floor of that room lifted up in the middle, and underneath was a narrow dark dungeon or hiding-place, in which the King of all this island was glad to hide himself, in order to escape from his persecutors; this narrow place opened below, by narrow stairs, into the garden, where is a door in the wall, hidden behind ivy. Then we went up another stair to the garret, and at the top of it there was another board in the floor, that lifted up, and went down by a small ladder into another hiding-place. But all these hiding-places were not enough to hide the King from his persecutors,—armed soldiers on horseback, who entered the house to search it. Then the King fled out by the door behind the ivy in the garden, and leapt over the garden wall into a field, and climbed up an oak-tree, and hid himself among its thick branches. Papa saw this tree. It is done round

with a rail, to distinguish it from the rest, and to keep it sacred. . . . . Then the soldiers, not finding him in the house, galloped about into the wood, and passed under the very tree; but God saved the King, and they found him not. . . . . There are many lessons to be learned from this, which your dear mother will teach you, for I am tired, and my horse is getting ready. So God bless you, and your little sister, and your dear mother, and all the house. Farewell!

"Your loving father,
"EDWD IRVING."

After this, his correspondence is exclusively addressed to his wife, and continues, from point to point along his journey, an almost daily chronicle:—

"Shobdon (half way between Ludlow and Kington),
Thursday, 18th September, 1834.

"MY DEAREST WIFE,—In this beautiful village, embowered with trees and clothed with ivy and roses, in the little inn—where are assembled the last remains of a wake, which has holden since Sunday—from a little bar-room or parlour within the ample kitchen, where they are playing their drunken tricks with one another—I sit down to write you. I know not wherefore I went to Shrewsbury,* but wherefore I returned to Bridgenorth I discern was for seeing Mejanel, and opening to him the whole state of his soul, in the presence of Mr Dalton, and with his confirmation; and I do hope it will lead to that repentance and cleansing of heart which may prepare him for the ordination of the Lord, which, I trust, will not be delayed, in the great mercy and goodness of our Lord. I charged him† at no rate to go to France without ordination, and I think I prevailed with him. . . . . .

"But, oh! how shall I describe the beauty and the blessedness of the land through which I have travelled these three days. Whether it be that the riding on horseback gives time for the objects to enter and produce these impressions, I know not, but it seems to me as if I had never seen the beauty and the fatness of the land till now. I am filled with the admiration of it. My way to Ludlow lay over the ridge which joins the two Clay (or Clee) mountains, and as they rose before me, in their blue and naked majesty, out of the ripe vegetation and abundant wood of the country around, I was filled with delight. My road, both yesterday and to-day, though a turnpike road, is out of the great lines, and I was as solitary and sequestered as I could have wished; leaving me much opportunity of communion with God. . . . . I keep this letter open till I come to Kington. My dinner, ham and egg, a cold fowl, an apple-tart and cheese, a tumbler of cider, a glass of Sicilian

* He had, however, in a former letter, described to his wife the impulse he felt to seek out a young surgeon, whom he believed to be in Shrewsbury, who was in danger of falling from the faith, but who, he found on going there, had left the place.

† The person here referred to was a French preacher, who had been a very prominent figure in the excitement which attended the origin of the "gifts" in Scotland.—See *Memoir of Mr Story of Rosneath.*

Tokay, of which Mr Brydgeman put two bottles in my saddle [bags]. . . . . I am safe in Mr Whalley's, and have passed a good night. Tell your dear mother I had such a memento of Kirkcaldy Manse—ginger wine in a long-necked decanter. . . . . Love and blessing to the children, and to all the house.

"Your faithful and loving husband,
"EDWD IRVING."

"Ross, 23rd September.

"I have ten minutes to the post, being just arrived at Ross. A Mr Davies came to Kington, and invited me to Hereford, and gathered an inquiring people, whom I instructed, under Mr Davies' authority, as his chaplain. He has ridden thus far with me, and goes on to Monmouth, where I expect to be at tea. I am getting daily better. The Lord bless you all!"

"Chepstow, 26th September.

"I was greatly comforted by your letter last night, having been in great distress of soul for dear Martin; and I give thanks to the Lord, who hath preserved him. . . . . Say to Mr T—— that I spent a most agreeable night and forenoon at his brother's, and that I feel my going to Monmouth was very much for his sake and wife's, both of whom, I think, are not far from the kingdom of heaven. I also saw and conversed much with the Rev. Mr Davies, of whom I thought very highly. . . . . Here, at Chepstow, the seed has indeed been sown by Mr Sturgeon, and I am watering it with words of counsel and instruction, teaching them the way of worshipping God, and encouraging them to gather together and call upon His name. I think there is the foundation of a Church laid in this place. Now, my dear wife, I am surely better in my health, for my appetite is good, and my pulse is come to be under 100. The Lord's hand I feel to be with me, and I believe that I am doing Him service. Farewell! the Lord be your stay."

"Raglan (half way to Crickhowel),
Saturday, 27th September.

"The inn here, at which I have just arrived to breakfast, is also the post-office, and I have about three quarters of an hour to write you. My visit to Chepstow, I feel, hath been very well bestowed. I had the people two nights to Mrs Sturgeon's, and they came in great numbers, and I had great presence and power of the Lord in ministering to them the two chapters which we offered in the family worship, Luke xi. and Matthew xxv., and great, I am persuaded, will the fruits of Mr Sturgeon's ministry here be. But the thing wherein the hand of the Lord is most seen is His bringing me into contact and conference with all the young clergymen round about. At Tintern, which is two-thirds of the way from Monmouth to Chepstow, I rested my horse, while I went to see the famous ruins of the abbey. I had not been within the abbey walls five minutes when there was a ring for admittance, and two young men of a scholar-like appearance came in. One immediately came forward and saluted me with information that his father, a barrister in Dublin, had once been entertained in our house, and the young man

with him was also a clergyman;—with both of them I have had much close conversation, and with two at Chepstow. . . . My time is exhausted: I will, therefore, speak of myself. I think I may say I am indeed very much better, and hardly conscious of an invalid's feelings. . . . . I continue to use Mr Darling's prescriptions, and find the good of them. Now, as concerneth speaking, I am fully persuaded, by experience, that it is the proper exercise of the lungs, and, being taken in measure, it is always good for me. But nothing has done me so much good as to hear of dear Martin's recovery. That was indeed healing both to body and soul."

"Crickhowel, 28th September.

"I arrived here safe and in good order, horse and man, last night; and, because they could not get a messenger over to Mr Waddy, who lives about two miles off, I made my arrival known by a note to the Rev. T. Price, Mr Tudor's friend, who came to the inn very speedily, and took me up to his house to spend the evening. I find him much instructed in the truth, but holding it rather by the light of the understanding than by the faith of the Spirit; still he is, as I judge, one by whom the Lord will greatly bless this principality, through the continual prayer of the Church. Oh! tell Mr Tudor to keep Wales upon his heart, and Price and Scale. Scale is the young man at Merthyr Tydvil, who breakfasted with us once. He is a precious man—one set of the Lord for a great blessing, I am convinced, though the time be not yet fully come. He rode over to-day, and poor Waddy had ridden early all the way to Abergavenny, six miles back on the road, thinking to find me there, and ride in with me: but I had resolved that the Christian Sabbath should not fall beneath the Jewish in being a day of entire rest for man and horse. Mr Price is a great Welsh scholar, a literary and patriotic man, full of taste and knowledge; young—that is, within my age—a bachelor, whose wife, I fear, is more his books than the Church as yet. Yet I love him much, and owe him much love. I breakfasted with him this morning, and afterwards went to the church in this place, where an aged man, Mr Vaughan, who fears God much, is the minister; for Mr Price went to serve a church in Welsh some three miles off. . . We did not meet till the interval, when we all went over to Mr Price's other cure, a church over the water, close by. He preached on the coming of the Lord, a short but true sermon. Then afterwards he asked me, at the request of the family, to go with him to a sick lady, who had been prayed for, and gave the whole household ministry into my own hand. The rest of the evening I have spent with the three brethren, Price, Scale, and Waddy, and having supped upon a piece of bread and a tumbler of precious beer, homebrewed, I sit down to write to you before I offer up my worship and go to rest. Now, my dear, I think it rather of the Lord that we should remain apart till I be brought home in the good time of the Lord. . . . . It is a trial to me to be separated from you in many ways, and chiefly in this, that I may testify to you the new love with which God hath filled my bosom towards you; that I may bear you ever upon my arm, as I do now bear you upon my heart."

"Builth (border of Radnor and Brecon),
29th September.

"I am again returned to the banks of the Wye, and shall ascend it to near its summit in 'huge Plinlimmon.' Of all rivers that I have seen, the grace of its majesty surpasseth. I first came in sight of its scenery as we rode to Hereford, a few miles from Kington; and as far as the eye could stretch up to the mountains from which it issued, it seemed a very wilderness of beauty and fruitfulness. My eye was never satisfied with beholding it. But how impossible it is to give you an idea of the vast bosom of Herefordshire as I saw it from the high lands we cross on the way to Ross! . . . My soul was altogether satisfied in beholding the works of my God. . . . . But the valley of the Usk, where Crickhowel is, hath a beauty of its own, so soft, with such a feathery wood scattered over it, gracing with modesty, but not hiding, the well-cultivated sides of the mountains, whose tops are resigned to nature's wildness. . . . . Now, my dearest, of myself: I think I grow daily better by daily care and the blessing of God upon it. I ride thirty miles without any fatigue, walking down the hills to relieve my horse. . . . . I have you and the children in continual remembrance before God, and them also that are departed, expressing my continual contentedness that they are with Him. Now, farewell! say to Martin that I am going to write him a letter about another king, St Ethelred."

This promised letter to his little son was never written; but there breaks in here a birthday epistle to the little Maggie of his heart:—

"Aberystwyth, Oct. 2nd, 1834.

"My dear Daughter Margaret,—This is your birthday, and I must write you a letter to express a father's joy and thanksgiving over so dear a child. Your mother writes me from Brighton, that Miss Rooke has written to her such an account of your diligence and obedience. It made me so glad that you were beginning to show that you are not only my child, but the child of God, regenerate in Baptism. Bring thou forth, my sweet child, the fruits of godliness daily, more and more abundantly. I am now got to Aberystwyth, and dwell upon the shore of the sea, in the same house with Mr Carré, who goes out and preaches every evening at five o'clock, and I go out and stand beside him. You will delight to hear that I am much better, through the goodness of God; and that I hope to be quite well before I reach Scotland. . . . . I beseech you, my beloved child, to have your soul always ready for the hand of the Lord, who is your true Father. I am but his poor representative. Now, blessings be upon thee, and dear Martin, and dear Isabella! I pray God to keep you many years in health, and afterwards to receive thee to His glory. . . . . Remember me with affection to all the house; and be assured that I am

"Your loving father,
"Edwd Irving."

He then resumes the chronicle of his journey:—

"Aberystwyth, October 3rd.

"I wrote to Maggie yesterday, which, with a letter to Mr Whally, I found occupation enough. . . . . The letter I wrote you from Builth was too late for the post. That day was the sweetest of all my journey, for it was among the well-sunned, well-aired mountains, where every breeze seemed to breathe health upon me. My road during the morning was up rough, and, in many places, wooded glens; but after passing Rhyadher, where I breakfasted, I cleared the region of cultivation, taking the hill-road to what they call the Devil's Bridge, or Havod Arms, an inn within twelve miles of Aberystwyth. Among the sheep and the sheepfolds I found that air which I wanted; hunger came hours before its time, and I seemed to feel the strength of my youth. I do not find it so by the shore of the sea, though this be assuredly a sweet and healthy place, at the opening of a short valley, which in five or six miles carries you into the bleak air of the mountains. It will give you some idea of my returning strength when I tell you that next morning I arose at seven, and, with the Boots of the inn for my guide, descended to the bottom of that fearful ravine of roaring cataracts, 320 feet below the level of the road, and ascended again, and surveyed them one by one with great delight. . . . . This Aberystwyth is against letter-writing. I was interrupted yesterday; and so I will interrupt my description, and leave it for a letter to dear Maggie. The house of Mrs Brown was open to me, and a bed prepared for me. Mr Carré also abides under her roof since her son came home. . . . . Mr Brown has the felicity of seeing his family joined together in one mind. . . . . No doubt they have all to be tried, and their faith is yet but in its infancy; but it is most heart-cheering to see the house of one mind. Since my coming, Mr Brown has opened his house at morning and evening worship to 'those who are godly disposed,' where I have had an opportunity of instructing and counselling many of the Lord's people. Dear Carré preaches in the open air at the head of the Marine Parade, where the main street of the ancient town descends into the noble crescent which hath been builded of late years for the accommodation of the company who chiefly resort from the West of England hither for the sea-bathing and sea-air; and he was wont to open the Scriptures further, within-doors, at seven, to those who came to Mr Brown's; but now that he has seen the better way of combining domestic worship with that household ministration, I think he will adopt it, and continue what I have begun. Mr Brown departs for his cure at Maddington on Wednesday next week.

"Harlech, Merionethshire, 7th October.

"I write you from the inn which overlooks one of the three strong castles with which Edward III. did bridle all this region of North Wales. It stands frowning, like the memory of its master, over land and over sea. Out of the window, where I have dined, I have seen the most beautiful sunset, full of crimson glory, with here and there a streak of the brightest green. It was at the time that I was with you all in spirit in Newman Street, and I took it as a figure of the latter-day glory. Yesterday I set out from Aberystwyth, from that dear family, who were all up to see me off at seven o'clock; and, being mindful of Dr Darling's words, rode enveloped in India rubber to Machynlleth (which being

pronounced is Machuntleth). This was a stage of eighteen miles before breakfast; nowise particularly interesting . . . But from Machynlleth to Dolgelly is by the foot of Cader-Idris, a mountain surpassed by none, if equalled by any, for its rugged majesty and beauty. I had much communion with God in the first part of this stage, for the Church, for Mr Cardale, but above all, for you and for all who have received from us life. When I descended upon the base of Cader-Idris, on my left hand there shot out a vista towards the sea, which terminated in a clear and bright sky. I cannot describe the pleasure which I had in looking away from the terrible grandeur of Cader-Idris, down that sweet glade opening into the beautiful skies. But it was the instant duty of myself and horse to cross up a shoulder of the mountain and get on our way. . . . . About six I arrived at my inn, and was much refreshed by my dinner and bed. This morning I sent my horse early down to Barmouth, proposing myself to come by a boat, which, I was told, sailed at half-past nine and got down in forty minutes—all to see the scenery, which is very, very beautiful upon the estuary or loch; but when I came to the boathouse, about two miles walking, I found the boat would not be there for more than an hour, would tarry some time, and then had a rough sea and rough head-wind to sail with. My purpose was to be here before the meeting of the church, and this is ten miles from Barmouth. There was nothing for it but to ferry over the water, and walk the remaining eight miles, along with three skinners going thither on their business, men in whom was the fear of God. I gave them my great-coat to carry, and walked by the rough side of the loch with a strong wind ahead, and was no worse, but I thought rather the better for it. Then I rode hither, and being all alone, have been more with you than with myself. Truly the Lord hath laid Mr Cardale upon my heart, and the whole Church, and all those to be presented, and I have prayed for them every one, according to my discernment. Show this sentence to Mr Cardale, or transcribe it, for I am not able to write to-night, ... and this to Mr Woodhouse—(two sentences in Latin are here inserted in the manuscript). It is not because I may or can not trust you, most trustworthy wife, that I write these answers in Latin, but because I would not take you out of your place . . . . Now the peace and blessing of the Lord be with you and all the house."

"Bangor, 9th October.

"My dearest Wife,—For I have heart and strength to write only to you; indeed it is in my heart to write many letters; but a due sense of my duty of resting when the labours of the day are over holds my hand, and I have committed my flock into the Shepherd's hand. I rode from Harlech, before breakfast, along the sea-shore until we found an inlet to follow up, at the head of which sits Taw-y-bwlch, in such stillness and beauty, among the most sublime and beautiful mountain-scenery. Oh! it is a place of peace and repose! Thence I crossed rugged and barren mountains, with occasional views of the ocean, until the road swept up a mountain-pass of great sublimity, and opened at the head of it upon Beddgelert, a place of the like character with Taw-y-bwlch, but not so sequestered. (This is for Maggie, but it is profitable to us all.) Beddgelert means, 'the grave of Gelert.' Gelert was a hound of match-

less excellences. . . . . The hound fell at his master's feet, and breathed out his life in piteous moanings. He was hardly dead when the babe awoke from some place of greater security whither the dog had carried it, and when they looked beneath the bed they found a mighty and ferocious wolf, whose mangled body showed what a desperate conflict poor Gelert had waged that day for his master's infant. Ah, me! what faithfulness God hath put into the hearts of his creatures! what pure love must be in His own! The name Bedd-Gelert commemorates that event. Here I had a harper to play to me the choicest of the old Welsh airs, *Of a noble race was Shenkin, The March of the men of Harlech*, &c. The old blind man was very thankful for a sixpence, and I taught him how to use his harp as David had done, in the praise of his God. From thence I set myself to begird the roots of Snowdon, for he covered his head from the sight of man. I had seen his majestic head lifted above the mountains, from Aberystwyth, and it is the only sight I have had of him. He is the monarch of many. The mountains stand around him as they shall stand around Zion. When I was seeking to disentangle the perfect form of one of them from the mist, which I thought must surely be he, a countryman told me my mistake. That beautiful sunset which I saw at Harlech yielded only wind; and as I rode up these defiles the wind was terrible. It made the silken shroud over my shoulders rattle in my horse's ears until he could hardly abide it; and, in truth, I had to take it off, for the bellowing of the wind itself was enough for the nerves of man or horse. I never endured such a battery of wind. I arrived at my inn a little after the setting of the sun—Dolbaddon, an inn like a palace. Thence I rode this morning to Carnarvon, secluded on the outgoing of the Menai Straits; and I turned off my road to look at the bridge—that wonder of man's hand. And now here I am in the very house of the Shunamite woman, for though it is an inn like a castle, the Penrhyn Arms, mine hostess is a very mother. Mr Pope is resident here, having married a wife of the daughters of the land. To him I wrote a letter of brotherly love; but it hath been in vain, I fear. The Lord's will be done. Now I doubt that this is too late for the post; but come when it will, let it come with the blessing of God upon you and upon all the house. I begin to feel a strong desire that you were with me. I do not know, but it may be well to commit that thing to the Lord against the time I reach Glasgow."

"Flint, Saturday Night, 11th October.

"I am still able to praise the Lord for his merciful and gracious dealings; though these two last days, or rather the two before this, have been days of trial to me. When viewing the Menai Bridge I got wet by a sudden gust driven through the straits by the wind, and though I put on my cloak, and changed all at that motherly inn, I had a very fevered night, and was in a very fevered state next day. Still I felt my horse's back and the beautiful day to be my medicine, and rode to Conway very slowly, having a good deal of headache. There I found myself little better, and the inn being kept by a surgeon, I was greatly tempted to take his advice. My spirits sank for one half-hour, and I had formed the serious resolution of turning into the sick-room. But I remembered the words of the Lord upon my journey, and ordered my horse, and having

now not more than two hours of good daylight I rode with great speed, and, as it were, violently. This I soon discovered to be my remedy; for while the cool air fanned the heat of my lungs and carried it off, the violent riding brought out a gentle perspiration, until I came to the hotel at Abergele, where I gave myself with all my heart to cry to the Lord. I drank copiously of tea, and had gruel, and bathed my feet, which God so blessed, that when I awoke this morning, the feeling of all within my breast was such that I exclaimed, 'Can it be that I am entirely healed!' But I soon found that the Lord's hand is still upon me. Yet am I sure that I received a very great deliverance that night. To-day my headache has returned, with sickness. . . . .

"This is for Maggie. At the mouth of the Conway was a weir for catching fish, which belonged in very ancient times to the brother of the lord of these parts about Great Ormeshead. He had a son named Elfin, who had wasted all his substance, and wearied out his father's goodness, and was brought to great straits. He begged, as a last boon from his father, the weir for one night, thinking to catch many fish. But in the morning there was not one, only there was a basket, and a baby in it. He took the infant boy, and was careful of his upbringing. This boy grew to be Taliesin, the prince of all the British bards, who afterwards lived to reconcile his patron with his father. . . . . God keep you all, my dear children, and make you more and more abound to His glory."

"Flint, 12th October.

"The service is in Welsh this forenoon, and so I am at my inn, where indeed they have most tenderly treated me. It is English in the evening, and, God willing, I will go up to His house. Now, my dear, I write you again this day, though it will be the companion of my last night's letter, to express my decided judgment that you should not any longer be separated from me. My God is sufficient for me, I know; and He hath been my sufficiency during these three days and nights of the sharpest fiery trial, both of flesh and heart, which I have ever proved. I believe that upon my saddle, and by the strength of faith, I have fought against the most severe bilious fever. How in the night seasons the Psalms have been my consolations against the faintings of flesh and heart! And I believe God hath guided me to do things which were the very means of dispelling those fears and troubles. Last night I slept well from half-past nine till two, then I counted the hours as they chimed out from the clock on the staircase; and so I lay, parched with thirst and inward heat, and yet chilly, my head full of pain, my heart of fainting, but my faith steadfast. I felt that there was much of nervousness in it, and that by strong act I must dissolve it. The footpan, with the water that had been hot, but now was wintry cold (for last night was very chill), stood by the bed-side, and a little jug which had contained boiling water to keep up the temperature, was standing by its side. It was the breaking of the morning. I threw off flannels and stockings, and stood with my feet in the cold water, and poured with the jug the cold water from my shoulders downward. . . . . and all at once was a changed man, and had some winks of sleep.

"And again, when I had desired the maid to bring my breakfast to me in bed, purposing to keep my bed all day, or some considerable part

of it, it occurred to me that this also was yielding to the disease, and I instantly arose, dressed myself, ate my breakfast—a mutton chop, stale bread, and tea, and went out and walked for half an hour by the seashore, breathing such health and sweetness from the air of heaven.

"(Monday night, Liverpool, Mr Tarbet's).—The Lord hath made vain the remedies of man. The last three days have been the days and nights of sorest trial I ever had. . . . The fevered heat of my hands and head in the night season, and the sleepless hours appointed to me, are indeed a new thing in the history of my trouble. Yet I am strong, witness my riding this day twenty-four miles. Nor have I any fears of myself; but I am strangely, strangely held, deeply afflicted. I felt myself shut up to the necessity of going direct from Liverpool to Greenock by the steamboat. I have written my mother, and proposed going that way, but have put it off. God may give me liberty as I return. Now I feel unable to take care of myself, and my calm judgment is that you should be my nurse and companion. I write not these things to trouble you, but to put you in possession of the truth. I will any way abide your answer here. . . . I now think Maggie should not come. In great haste, not to lose the post,

"Your faithful and loving husband,
"EDWD IRVING.

"Oh, how I have longed after you in heart and spirit!"

"Liverpool, 13th October.

"MY DEAREST ISABELLA,— . . . Last night I had comparatively good rest, and was able to keep down the fever and prevent the perspiration by timeous sponging with vinegar and water. What it indicates I know not, but I have had to-day and last night a good deal of those cold creepings upon the skin which Dr Darling used to inquire about. I think, before you leave London, you should let him know these things. There is nothing I have kept back from you.

"Now, my dear, I have sought to serve God, and I do put my trust in Him; therefore I am not afraid. He hath sore chastised me, but not given me over to death. I shall yet live and discover His wonderful works. I have oft felt as if one of the ends of the Lord in His visitation were to constrain me to send for you at this point of my progress; and that another was to preclude me from further journeying on horseback into these parts of England, and into Scotland. At the same time, in your coming, if you see it your duty to come, proceed tenderly and carefully in respect to yourself, coming by such stages as you can bear. I hope you will find me greatly better under this quiet and hospitable roof.

"Be of good courage, my dear wife, and bear thy trials, as thou hast ever done, with yet more and more patience and fortitude. It will be well with the just man at the last. . . . Now farewell. The blessing of God be upon you all.

"Your faithful and loving husband,
"EDWD IRVING."

Thus ended for ever the correspondence between the husband and wife. The history of that lingering journey, with its

breezes of health, its hopes of recovery, its pauses of refreshment among the sweet Welsh valleys, where the parish priests of a national church more powerful but less absolute than his own, opened wide their doors and their hearts to his presence and his counsels; the bits of legend picked up for his little Maggie; the silent progress along mountain-paths, all sanctified with prayer, where "the Lord laid" such a one "on his heart;" the forlorn temerity with which, fainting and fevered, he pushes on, no longer aware of the landscape or of the people round him, brought down to bare existence, hard enough ado to keep his frame erect on the saddle, and to retain light enough to guide his way in those dimmed eyes; the yearning that seizes upon him at last for the companion of his life, bursting out pathetically in that exclamation which he puts down, after his letter is finished, at the end, in an irrepressible outcry—"Oh, how I have longed after you in heart and spirit!"—all is clearer written in these letters than in anything that could be added to them. His wife obeyed his call at once, and joined him in Liverpool. Again her sisters write to each other, wringing their hands with a grief and impatience which can scarcely express itself in words. "Isabella set off for Liverpool on Thursday," says Mrs Hamilton; "in her letter she says she found Edward looking much worse than when he left home, his strength considerably reduced, and his pulse 100. Notwithstanding this, they were, she said, to sail for Glasgow on Monday, and so proceed to the ultimate object which was in view in Mr Irving's leaving home,—his going to Glasgow to organize a church there. Oh me! it is sad, sad to think of his deliberately sacrificing himself! Dr Darling has decidedly said that he cannot, humanly speaking, live over the winter, unless he retire to a milder climate and be entirely at rest. Yet at this inclement season they proceed northward, and take that cold and boisterous passage too, by way of making bad worse." No wonder those affectionate spectators were touched with the anger of grief in their powerless anguish, finding it impossible to turn him for a moment from the path to which he believed himself ordained, and compelled to look on and see him consummate all his sacrifices with this offering of his life.

The weather was boisterous and stormy, but the dying apostle—who was not an apostle, nor, amid all the gifts that surrounded him, anyway gifted, except as God in nature and grace had endowed His faithful servant—did not depart from his purpose. He went to Greenock, accompanied by his wife, whose heart was delivered from all wifely and womanish terrors by undoubting confidence in that "word of the Lord" which

had promised him a great and successful mission in Scotland. At Greenock they seem to have encountered Mrs Stewart Ker, a lady of singular piety, whom Irving valued highly, and whose remarkable letters, though not published, are known and prized by many good people. In one of these letters, dated October 25th, 1834, she thus describes his changed appearance, and the manner in which he entered Glasgow :—

"To human appearance he is sinking under a deep consumption. His gigantic frame bears all the marks of age and weakness; his tremendous voice is now often faltering, and when occasionally he breaks forth with all his former feeling, one sees that his bodily powers are exhausted. Add to all this the calm chastened dignity of his expression—his patient waiting upon God for the fulfilment of His purposes to himself and his flock through this affliction, and it is exceedingly edifying. . . . I was going to Glasgow with them; and just before we left the house, he lifted up his hands in blessing, commending them (the family under whose roof he was) to Jesus, and to the reward of His grace, for their kindness to him. I had a great deal of conversation with him in the boat. . . . In driving through the crowded streets of Glasgow, he laid aside his hat and exclaimed, 'Blessed be the name of the Shepherd of Israel, who has brought us to the end of our journey in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Peace!' and continued for some time praying."

It was thus, with uplifted hands and words of thanksgiving and blessing, that he entered Glasgow. He thought he had a great work to accomplish in that centre of life and wickedness and sorrow; and so he had; but it was no longer to labour or battle that God called His servant. He was not destined to descend from the height of hope, which still trembled with the promised lustre of "power from on high," to the chill land of shadows and disappointment, and deferred blessings that lay below. But it was a surprise which his Master had prepared for him,—a nearer road to the glory and the perfection that he dreamed of—not to work nor to fight, but to die.

Here once more, and for the last time, Irving took the pen in his trembling hand, and revealed himself in the fast-closing twilight of his life. He wrote two pastoral letters from Glasgow, containing most pathetic acknowledgment * of the sins by which he and his Church had "let and hindered" the work of God—sins which, if they were anything more special than that general unbelief and slowness of heart with which every apostle has had to upbraid his fellow-Christians, are

* This confession seems, so far as I can make out, to refer specially to his mistake in acting upon a command, given by one of the gifted persons, without the authority of the apostle. See page 407.

lost in the mysterious records of the Church, and unintelligible except to those who may be thoroughly acquainted with all the details of its origin. His last private letter, written only ten days before his death to his "dear brother," William Hamilton, lies under no such obscuring haze,—but gives with sad and affecting simplicity a final glimpse of his fainting flesh and trusting soul: —

"You will be sorry to hear," he writes with the restrained utterance of weakness, "that I continue very weak. Indeed, the Lord has now permitted me to be brought very low; but my trust and confidence is in Him only, and not in any other, and when He sees fit He will renew my strength. Oh, my brother, cleave you to Him! He is the only refuge. Isabella is in excellent health, and sustained under all her trials. Samuel was with us yesterday. He is quite well, though much troubled for me, as I believe all my friends are."

These were the last words of private affection which dropped from his feeble pen. Amid the friends who were all troubled for him, he was the only one unmoved. He had not yet come to the discussion of that last question, which like all the rest was to be given against him, but still smiled with a heart-breaking confidence over the daily dying of his own wasted frame, waiting for the wonderful moment when God should send back the vigorous life-current to his forlorn and faithful heart.

The last scene of the history now approaches rapidly. For a few weeks he is visible about Glasgow—now appearing against the sunshine in a lonely street, his horse's hoofs echoing slowly along the causeway, his gaunt gigantic figure rising feeble against the light; now in the room which his Glasgow disciples have found to meet in—still preaching—recognizing one of Dr Chalmers's old "agency" who comes to see him after the service, and recalling, with the courtesy of the heart, to his wife, who has forgotten the stranger, the familiar Kirkcaldy name he bears; walking home after the worship is over, fain to lean upon the arm of the elder who has come hastily from London to be near him, while his wistful wife goes mournful by his side, carrying the stick which is now an insufficient support to his feebleness—sometimes pausing, as they thread the streets in this sad fashion, to take breath and gather strength; a most sorrowful, pathetic picture. The hearers were few in the Lyceum room, in comparison with former times; but in the street, as he passed along, many a sad glance followed him, and the people stood still, with compassionate looks, to point out to each

other "the great Edward Irving." His friend, Mr Story, came hurriedly up from Rosneath to see him, with hopes of persuading him thither, to that mild climate and tranquil seclusion; but found he had gone down to Erskine, on the opposite bank of the Clyde, to consult Dr Stewart, the physician-minister, with whom, in joyful youthful days, these two had spent their Saturday holidays in the East Lothian Manse. Neither Dr Stewart nor any man could aid him now. He came back to the house of the kind stranger and enthusiastic disciple who had taken him in, in Glasgow, and, nature refusing longer to keep up that unreasonable conflict, lay down upon the bed from which he was never to rise.

Dr Rainy, who attended him, informed me of various particulars in these last days; but indeed, so touched with tears, after nearly thirty years' interval, was even the physician's voice, and so vivid the presentment of that noble, wasted figure stretched in utter weakness, but utter faith, waiting for the moment when God, out of visible dying, should bring life and strength, that I cannot venture to record with any distinctness those heart-breaking details. By times, when on the very verge of the grave, a caprice of sudden strength seized the patient; he sighed for "God's air" and the outdoor freshness which he thought would restore him. He assured the compassionate spectator, whose skilled eyes saw the golden chords of life melting asunder, how well he knew that he was to all human appearance dying, yet how certainly he was convinced that God yet meant to raise him; and again, and yet again, commended "the work of the Holy Ghost" to all faith and reverence; adding, with pathetic humility, that of these gifts he himself had never been "found worthy." Never death-bed appealed with more moving power to the heart. His mother and sister came to see him, but I know nothing of the intercourse between that sorrowful mother and the last and greatest of her sons. His life-long friends from Kirkcaldy were also there to watch by his bed, to support the poor wife, whose confidence gave way at last, and who consented, with such pangs of natural love and disappointed faith as it would be hard to estimate, that the "word of the Lord" must have had some other interpretation—that God had no purpose of interposing, in visible power, for his deliverance, and that Edward must die; and their home letters give the clearest picture of Irving's last hours. With fluctuations of despairing hope, Dr Martin and his son wrote to the anxious sisters. Sometimes there were better symptoms—gleams of appetite, alleviation of pain; but throughout

all, a burning fever, which nothing could subdue, consumed away the fainting life. "Your mother and I are at Mr Taylor's," writes Dr Martin, on the 4th December; "he is a most devout believer in the reality of the gifts, of Mr Irving's divine commission, &c., and has hardly ever faltered in his faith that Edward is still to recover strength; till this morning Isabella has never had a doubt of it." This was on Thursday. As the week waned, the frame which enclosed that spirit, now almost wholly abstracted with its God, died hourly. He grew delirious in those solemn evenings, and "wandered" in his mind. Such wandering! "So long as his articulation continued so distinct that we could make anything of his words, it was of spiritual things he spoke, praying for himself, his church, and his relations." Sometimes he imagined himself back among his congregation in London, and in the hush of his death chamber, amid its awe-stricken attendants, the faltering voice rose in broken breathings of exhortation and prayer. "Sometimes he gave counsel to individuals: and Isabella, who knew something of the cases, could understand" what he meant. Human language has no words, but those which are common to all mental weakness, for such a divine abstraction of the soul, thus hovering at the gates of heaven. Once in this wonderful monologue he was heard murmuring to himself sonorous syllables of some unknown tongue. Listening to those mysterious sounds, Dr Martin found them to be the Hebrew measures of the 23rd Psalm—"The Lord is my Shepherd," into the latter verses of which the dying voice swelled as the watcher took up and echoed the wonderful strain—"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." As the current of life grew feebler and feebler, a last debate seemed to rise in that soul which was now hidden with God. They heard him murmuring to himself in inarticulate argument, confusedly struggling in his weakness to account for this visible death which at length his human faculties could no longer refuse to believe in—perhaps touched with ineffable trouble that his Master had seemed to fail of His word and promise. At length that self-argument came to a sublime conclusion in a trust more strong than life or death. As the gloomy December Sunday* sank into the night shadows, his latest audible words on earth fell from his pale lips. "The last thing like a sentence we could make out was, 'If I die, I die unto the Lord. Amen.'" And so, at the wintry midnight hour which ended that final Sabbath on

* December 7th.

earth, the last bonds of mortal anguish dropped asunder, and the saint and martyr entered into the rest of his Lord.

Amen! He who had lived to God, for so many hard and bitter years enduring all the pangs of mortal trouble—in his Lord at last, with a sigh of unspeakable disappointment and consolation, contented himself to die. I know not how to add anything more to that final utterance, which rounds into a perfection beyond the reach of art, this sorrowful and splendid life. So far as sight or sound could be had of him, to use his own touching words, he had "a good voyage," though in the night and dark. And again let us say, Amen!

They buried him in the crypt of Glasgow Cathedral, like his Master, in the grave of a stranger—the same man who had first introduced him to London coming forward now to offer a last resting-place to all that remained of Edward Irving. He was followed to that noble vault by all that was good and pious in Glasgow, some of his own personal friends, and many of his immediate followers, mingling in the train with the sober members of Dr Chalmers's agency, and "most of the clergy of the city," men who disapproved his faith while living, but grudged him not now the honour due to the holy dead. The great town itself thrilled with an involuntary movement of sorrow. "Every other consideration," says the *Scottish Guardian*, a paper at all times doubly orthodox, "was forgotten, in the universal and profound sympathy with which the information was received," and all voices united to proclaim over him that divine consolatory verdict of the Spirit, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." There he lies, in such austere magnificence as Scotland has nowhere else preserved to enshrine her saints, until his Lord shall come, to vindicate, better than any human voice can do, the spotless name and honour of His most faithful servant and soldier. So far as this volume presents the man himself, with his imperfections breaking tenderly into his natural grandeur, always indivisible, and moving in a profound unity of nature through such proof of all sorrows as falls to the lot of few, I do not fear that his own words and ways are enough to clear the holy and religious memory of Edward Irving of many a cloud of misapprehension and censure of levity; and so far as I have helped this, I have done my task.

He died in the prime and bloom of his days, forty-two years old, without, so far as his last writings leave any trace, either decadence of intellect or lowering of thought; and left, so far as by much inquiry I have been able to find out,

neither an enemy nor a wrong behind him. No shadow of unkindness obscures the sunshine on that grave which in old days would have been a shrine of pilgrims. The pious care of his nephew has emblazoned the narrow Norman lancet over him with a John Baptist, austere herald of the cross and advent; but a tenderer radiance of human light than that which encircled the solitary out of his desert, lingers about that resting-place. There lies a man who trusted God to extremity, and believed in all Divine communications with faith as absolute as any patriarch or prophet; to whom mean thoughts and unbelieving hearts were the only things miraculous and out of nature; who desired to know nothing in heaven or earth, neither comfort, nor peace, nor rest, nor any consolation, but the will and work of his Master, whom he loved—yet to whose arms children clung with instinctive trust, and to whose heart no soul in trouble ever appealed in vain. He was laid in his grave in the December of 1834—a life-time since; but scarce any man who knew him can yet name, without a softened voice and a dimmed eye, the name of Edward Irving—true friend and tender heart—martyr and saint.

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